

# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

## **Monterey, California**



## **THESIS**

**THE ROLE OF THE COMPANY OFFICER AT THE  
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY**

by

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June 2001

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ACADEMY**

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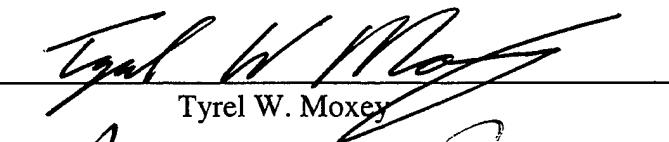
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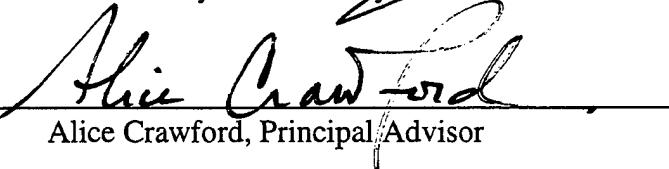
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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis is an exploratory study into the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, this thesis briefly documents the historic role of the Company Officer and further examines how the Company Officers from the 2000-2001 time frame perceive themselves either contributing or not contributing to the mission of the United States Naval Academy. The author conducted 30 questionnaires on the 30 Company Officers stationed at the Naval Academy during this period. In this questionnaire, the author specifically wanted to address the Company Officers' daily routines along with the Company Officers' perceptions on how they lead and mentor midshipmen. In addition, the author wanted to uncover some of the Company Officers greatest hindrances in the execution of their duties and their recommendations for improvement. The information gathered from the questionnaires enabled the researcher to glean four overall findings. Three of these findings discuss impediments to the Company Officer job, and the last finding addresses the overall perception Company Officers have about their job. Finally, the data retrieved from this study suggests that although the Company Officer billet is contributing to the overall mission of the United States Naval Academy, there is still room for improvement.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

Founded in 1845, the United States Naval Academy has been in the business of sculpting leaders for the military and this nation for over 150 years. The Naval Academy has a very unique way of transforming an 18-year-old man or woman, in relatively a few short years, into a person who is ready to handle the responsibilities of being a newly commissioned Ensign or Second Lieutenant. In order for this process to be successful, the midshipmen must be challenged in a myriad of ways. The academic, physical and moral challenges that midshipmen face at the Naval Academy throughout their four years help them to become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses as a leader.

The Naval Academy has been called a “leadership laboratory.” This hackneyed phrase relays a perception that midshipmen are able to experiment with different leadership styles, while at the Naval Academy, to see what works and what does not work. The premise behind this philosophy is that the leadership of the Naval Academy and the Navy would rather see these young men and women make mistakes at the Naval Academy instead of in the fleet when they are commissioned officers. However, in order for these incipient junior officers to learn from their mistakes, the Naval Academy must have a certain number of people, within the administration, who are in place to oversee and become personal with the midshipmen, in other words, to help them develop into leaders. These individuals are the Company Officers of the United States Naval Academy.

The role of the Company Officer at the Naval Academy is quite complex. Many people have described it as a managerial position, which oversees all administrative

matters involving midshipmen. Conversely, some have described the Company Officer as being the primary role model, mentor, counselor and disciplinarian for the midshipmen. Furthermore, some people have stated that the Company Officers rarely have time to interact with midshipmen because of the countless competing priorities on both the midshipmen and the Company Officers. Still others have even described the role of the Company Officer as one of the most rewarding jobs in the Navy. It is quite obvious that there are a variety of different opinions about the job, but nevertheless, the role that the Company Officer plays at the Naval Academy is one that can potentially have a lasting effect on all midshipmen.

## **B. OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, this study will analyze how the Company Officers perceive themselves contributing or not contributing to the overall mission of the United States Naval Academy. In addition, this study will highlight common areas that hinder the overall performance of the Company Officers in the execution of their duties. This study will also analyze how the Company Officers feel the Leadership Education and Development Program prepared them for their role as Company Officers. Finally, this thesis will provide valuable recommendations as to how the Naval Academy can improve the overall effectiveness and impact the Company Officers have on midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy.

## **C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Primary:

1. What is the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy?

Secondary:

1. How do the Company Officers feel the Leadership Education and Development Program helped to prepare them for their current role as Company Officers?
2. What factors do the Company Officers view as the biggest hindrances in the execution of their duties?
3. What are the Company Officers' recommendations for enhancing their own role and contribution to the mission of the United States Naval Academy?

## **D. SCOPE**

To fully understand the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy, it must be examined from a variety of angles. However, first it must be studied from the viewpoint of the Company Officers. Upon completion of this study, a further examination is required from the viewpoint of the Battalion Officers and the Commandant. Ultimately, the true impact a Company Officer has on midshipmen at the Naval Academy cannot be fully appreciated until the midshipmen graduate and move on to become Ensigns and Second Lieutenants.

This being said, it is clear that the scope of this study is incomplete. This is the beginning of, hopefully, a renewed focus on the expectations and roles required of a Company Officer at the Naval Academy, and more importantly, a beginning of possible changes that can be implemented to enhance the impact Company Officers have on midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy.

## **E. METHODOLOGY**

A majority of the information for this study came from the responses to the researcher's questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to address the key questions of the study: 1) What is the Role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy? 2) How did the Leadership Education and Development Program help prepare the current Company Officers? 3) What factors are the greatest hindrances to the Company Officers in the execution of their duties? 4) What are the Company Officers' recommendations for enhancing their role and contribution to the mission of the United States Naval Academy? The major findings that apply to these specific questions were gleaned from the questionnaires. Without a doubt, this thesis has the potential to be the catalyst for new change that will enhance the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy.

## **F. ORGANIZATION**

This thesis is divided into five chapters: Chapter II outlines a brief history of the Company Officer. Chapter III describes the research methods applied in this study. Chapter IV details the current role of the Company Officer, to include the findings discovered from all the residing Company Officers from the 2000-2001 time period. Chapter V provides the conclusions and recommendations for enhancing the role and impact that Company Officers have on midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy.

## **II. BACKGROUND OF THE COMPANY OFFICER PROGRAM**

The Executive Department of today is far from being a mere police force. The every-day contacts between officer and midshipman are pointed toward giving the midshipman the officer attitude through wise counsel, sound advice, and firm but just and understanding discipline (Sturdy, 1935; p. 1416).

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Since its conception on October 10, 1845, the United States Naval Academy has always had officers stationed on the Yard that resemble today's Company Officer. In the beginning, all the officers attached to the Naval Academy were there to help the Commandant of Midshipmen, who fell under the Executive Department. The officer's role was, as it is today, to develop midshipmen to become officers in the Naval Service. This statement sounds very honorable and for some, possibly, quite clear. However, for many, the mandate--to develop midshipmen--can seem very elusive. Many officers might ask; "How do I do that?" or "What is my role here?" or even, "When will I have time to develop midshipmen?" It is pure conjecture to guess what many officers, throughout time, have thought once they received orders to instruct at the Naval Academy. However, one can assume that many of the thoughts and feelings of today's officers were probably shared by many officers from the past.

With this premise in mind, this chapter focuses on answering a portion of the primary research question: What is the current role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy? A quick glance at the history of the Company Officer will help to preface what their role is at the United States Naval Academy today. Specifically, this chapter will answer the following questions: What is the origin of the Company Officer?

What was the Company Officer's role at inception? And, throughout time has the Company Officer role changed significantly?

To answer these specific questions, this chapter examines the founding days of the Naval Academy, its structure, and the manning. This chapter then steps through time, stopping at various points in history to evaluate how the structure of the Naval Academy had changed, along with the number of personnel assigned to be Company Officers. This brief summary of the Company Officer history will help to establish a framework that enables everyone to better understand the current role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy.

## **B. ROOTS OF THE COMPANY OFFICER**

In 1845, George Bancroft became Secretary of the Navy and with his profound knowledge, scholarship, culture and personal familiarity with educational methods he became, in essence, the catalyst that created the United States Naval Academy. On June 13, 1845 George Bancroft drafted a letter to the Board of Examiners: a board of officers that had convened at the Philadelphia Naval Asylum for the examination of midshipmen entitled for promotion. In his letter, George Bancroft asked the board to make recommendations regarding the creation of a naval school at Fort Severn (Annapolis, Maryland). He specifically asked the board these questions: "Might it not be well to have permanent instruction, and to send all midshipmen on shore to the school?" and "What plan of studies is most advisable?" (Soley, 1876; p. 43) It must be understood, that prior to the conception of the Naval Academy there were, in all, fourteen professors in the Naval Service: one at Boston, one at Norfolk, three at Philadelphia, three on special

service, and three language teachers at Boston, New York, and Norfolk, respectively (Soley, 1876; p.39). The instruction in the Naval Service prior to 1845, therefore, could be characterized as very disjointed and scattered. “Instead of concentrating the force, and thereby giving it strength and unity and the basis of an efficient organization, it was spread out in fragments at Navy-yards, and, worse still, in cruising ships” (Soley, 1876; p. 41).

After the Board of Examiners reviewed the letter from George Bancroft they responded by saying that if the location at Fort Severn is selected for the naval school, they recommend commencing it at once. They also recommended that the cadets, for the naval school should be appointed in the same fashion as West Point. The Board of Examiners assumed that the school would be established at the Fort Severn and, therefore, offered this recommendation: There should be “Officers of the Establishment,” which should consist of one Captain, to command ashore and afloat, one commander, as the executive officer, three lieutenants, one surgeon, one assistant surgeon, one purser, one chaplain, one secretary to the senior captain and superintendent-in-chief, one clerk to the commander, one purser’s clerk, one purser’s steward and one officers’ guard of Marines to give instruction in infantry tactics and the sword exercise. Also recommended by the examiners was a “Board of Instruction” that would consist of one professor of English, one assistant professor of English, one professor of the French language, one professor of mathematics, one assistant professor of mathematics, one professor of natural philosophy, one professor of chemistry, and one instructor of drawing and mapping (Soley, 1876; p. 46). Through the dialogue between the Board of Examiners

and George Bancroft, the Secretary of the Navy, it was clear that all the naval schools would be consolidated on the banks of the Severn.

On Friday, October 10, 1845 Lieutenant James H. Ward, USN became the first Commandant of Midshipmen. His official title was that of Executive Officer, and he also became the chief instructor of gunnery and steam. In addition, he was also the President of the Academic Board. Ostensibly, from 1845-1850 the School, in an effort to burgeon, spent a considerable amount of time adapting itself for the students, instead of having the students adapt to the school. Commander Frankly Buchanan, however, the first Superintendent, did his utmost to instill some discipline into the midshipmen. In fact, there were several cases recorded that discussed how Commander Buchanan dismissed some midshipmen because of serious breaches in discipline. Nevertheless, many people involved with the day-to-day running of the school thought it needed to be reorganized (Sturdy, 1935; p.1414).

In 1850, a board was convened by Commodore Shubrick, USN to draw up a code of regulations for the incipient naval school, and under this new code the school became the United States Naval Academy. Many have considered this the point where midshipmen had to adapt themselves to the school. The new Commandant under this regime was Lieutenant T.T. Craven, USN and he was also the Executive Officer of the Academy. Therefore, he became the Head of the Department of Seamanship, Ordnance, Naval Gunnery, Naval Tactics, and the Art of Defense. He was assisted by a number of officers on his staff. In fact, the senior officer in each department was called an "assistant to the Commandant." These officers are the root of what is currently referred to as the Company Officer (Sturdy, 1935; p. 1415).

Commodore Shubrick's structure was in place until 1875. At this point, the Commandant of Cadets, as he was called, discontinued his role as the head of the academic department. Instead, he became the head of what would later be called the Department of Discipline. When this change occurred, the Commandant of Cadets still had several officers and assistants who aided him in his daily duties. In 1882 the title of "cadet-midshipmen" was changed to "naval cadet" and in 1902 it was again changed to "midshipman." Therefore, in 1902 the Commandant became known as the Commandant of Midshipmen and the Head of the Department of Discipline. The name of the Department of Discipline lasted until 1914. Then it was renamed the Executive Department (Sturdy, 1935; p. 1415).

In 1914, due to a larger student body size, the Brigade organization was revamped from two battalions to one regiment consisting of four battalions with three companies in each battalion. This structure remained in place through 1935 when, at that time, there were 17 officers assigned to the Commandant and the Executive Department. During this period, there was a total of eight Company Officers whose role was tantamount to every officers' role in the Executive Department: "The every-day contacts between officer and midshipman are pointed toward giving the midshipman the officer attitude through wise counsel, sound advice and firm but just and understanding discipline" (Sturdy, 1935; p. 1416).

By the fall of 1965, there were a considerable number of changes at the Naval Academy. One of the most obvious was the size of the Brigade: 4114 midshipmen. Along with this expansion in the number of midshipmen, came an increase in the size of the faculty. At this time the faculty staff consisted of 281 officers and 287 civilian

instructors. Most of the military officers on the faculty staff had master's degrees or the equivalent, and all the civilians possessed either a master's degree or a doctorate. At this time, the Brigade was comprised of two regiments, consisting of six battalions with six companies in each battalion. The Executive Department was still in existence and was controlled by the Commandant of Midshipmen (Drought, 1966; p. 3). The main function of the Executive Department was to oversee and supervise the military portion of training that the midshipmen received. Specifically, this entailed supervision of "infantry drills, parades, watch standing, and the performance of midshipmen in other non-academic areas" (Drought, p. 3). The officers charged in assisting the Commandant in the execution of these duties were the Battalion Officers and the thirty-six Company Officers. In 1966 Drought stated that these officers, the Company Officers, "work and live in close contact with the midshipmen and are thus able to further the development of the midshipmen in personal and military character through precept and example, by counsel and guidance, and when required, by disciplinary action" (Drought, p 3). This 1966 description of what a Company Officer did is congruent with what a Company Officer strives to achieve today.

Due to a recent renovation project of Bancroft Hall, the current Naval Academy structure consists of one Brigade, two Regiments, six Battalions, and thirty Companies. The Battalion Officers of today conduct nearly the same role as did the Battalion Officers of 1966: These officers "provide oversight for training, counseling, and guiding Midshipmen through their four years of development" (Kyle, 2000; p. 2). Furthermore, according to the United States Naval Academy Organization Manual (1996), the Company Officer's role also has changed very little since 1966: These Company

Officers “provide training, counseling, and guidance for Midshipmen in their development into superior Naval leaders” (Kyle, 2000; p. 2). Even though the role of the Company Officer has not really changed since 1966, there has been a significant policy and administration change that has occurred in the development of the Company Officer: The Leadership Education and Development Program (LEAD).

In 1995, the leadership at the United States Naval Academy determined that the potential impact the Company Officer could have on Midshipmen may be improved significantly if a program was instituted that better prepared junior officers for their upcoming role as Company Officers (Cunningham, 1999; p. 1). Therefore, in 1996, the Naval Academy, in conjunction with the Naval Postgraduate School, instituted a new program that was designed specifically for this purpose. The Program was and still is called the Leadership Education and Development Program. The students assigned to this program are, for the most part, junior officers from the Naval Service that have all completed at least one tour in the fleet. Through a one-year course of study, these junior officers earn a Master of Science degree in Leadership and Human Resource Development (Cunningham, 1999). The specific courses, which are taken by all the students, have been tailored to hopefully meet the many demands that will face these future Company Officers. Here is a list of a few of the classes that are completed sometime throughout the year: Leadership, Ethics, Educational Theory, Counseling, Performance Assessment, Managing Diversity, Motivation and Empowerment, Leadership in a Military Culture, and Organizational Design. This is by no means a complete list of all the classes, but this sampling demonstrates that there is a wide range of topics covered in this one-year course of study. In 1966, the leadership of the Naval

Academy understood the significant role the Company Officers had on the development of midshipmen, and it was the hope of the 1995 administration that this LEAD Program would significantly benefit this influential role.

Overall, this cursory examination of the Naval Academy's history has provided convincing evidence that the role of the Company Officer has changed very little. The Company Officer works for the Commandant and these Company Officers are charged with helping to develop midshipmen in "personal and military character." This, however, is still a very vague and obscure mission statement for a junior officer assigned to the Naval Academy. Even with this historical look, many of the questions about the role of the Company Officer remain unanswered. In the following chapter, the discussion of what truly transpires, today, with regard to the role of the Company Officer will be revealed.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODS**

There is no perfect data-collection method. Self-administered questionnaires are preferable when you are dealing with literate respondents; you are confident of getting a response rate of at least 70%; and the questions you want to ask do not require the use of visual aids such as cue cards, charts, and the like (Bernard, 2000; p. 278).

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The questionnaire method used for obtaining the necessary data, from which conclusions and findings were drawn, was believed to be the most efficient and effective approach. It is important, however, to understand the role that the researcher had in this study. The researcher was enrolled in the Leadership Education and Development Program (LEAD). This program was, and still remains, the precursor program to becoming a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. Therefore, how this study was conducted was of great interest to both the researcher and his fellow contemporaries in the LEAD Program. By no means, was the researcher looking for specific problems with regards to the role of the Company Officer. He was simply trying to determine the current role of the Company Officer, some of the challenges of being a Company Officer, and how the administration could better enhance the role of the Company Officer. In the end, the personal stake the researcher had in this study only added to the sincere care and objectivity of the research method.

#### **B. DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

The use of a self-administered questionnaire was paramount for the successful completion of this thesis. The questionnaire was unbiased and was tailored to incur

responses to particular thesis questions. The participation of all thirty Company Officers residing at the Naval Academy during the 2000-2001 time period added a great deal of credibility to the final results and conclusions.

It is important to note that each one of these questionnaires was independently filled out by the Company Officers. Over a period of approximately one month, each Company Officer devoted the requisite amount of time for the completion of the questionnaire, and by no means, did the Company Officers collaborate on their responses to the questionnaire. This type of independent, sequestered sampling added a tremendous amount of credibility to the findings gleaned from the questionnaires.

### **C. QUESTIONNAIRE**

This questionnaire was specifically designed to answer all the research questions, while concurrently gathering information from three separate and distinct data areas: demographics, quantitative, and qualitative (See Appendix A). Through the synthesis of all three of these data subsets, congruently and separately, the answers to the research questions became apparent. It is important to note, for the quality of research, the make-up of each of the distinct data subsets and the research questions the data subsets answered.

Data subset one consisted of all the demographic data gathered from the questionnaire. Specifically, it asked six questions: Service, Rank, Years of Service, Occupational Specialty, Gender, and Months as a Company Officer. The data from this subset were analyzed to determine if there were any significant trends with regards to other answers. For instance, the researcher could compare whether certain Military

Occupational Specialties all responded congruently to a particular question, or the researcher could make the same comparison with regards to gender, time as a Company Officer, or years of service. Having this type of demographic data enabled the researcher to highlight certain trends or lack of trends in the findings.

Data subset two consisted of all the quantitative questions the researchers used in compiling his data. "As sciences mature, they [researchers] come naturally to depend more on quantitative data and on quantitative tests of qualitative described relations" (Bernard, 2000, p.21). The data that were gathered from all of the quantitative questions helped not only to answer specific research questions, but it also added definitive numbers to certain research questions, which, according to Bernard, can add more information to your research.

The specific questions in this subset are questions 5, 8, 9, 11,13, and 14 (See Appendix A). Question 5 asks, "How many minutes or hours do you spend a day with each of the following categories?" This question specifically addresses research question 1: "What is the Current Role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy." Question 8 asks the responder to "Fill in the level of frustration that you experience when interacting with each of the following categories." This question addresses research question 3: "What factors are the biggest hindrances to the Company Officer in the execution of their duties." Question 9 asks the responder to "rank [his or her] relationship with [their] Battalion Officer in the following Categories." This question also addresses research question 3. Question 11 asks, specifically, about the LEAD Program and how it helped prepare Company Officers for their current role. Thus, it addresses research question 2: "How do the current Company Officers feel the

LEAD Program prepared them for their current role as Company Officers.” Finally, questions 13 and 14 address, respectively, how many midshipmen the Company Officers interact with on a daily basis and how they, the Company Officers, rate their overall experience at being a Company Officer. The answers to these two questions address research question 1. With the use of quantitative questions, the researcher was able to add specific numbers that he used to answer three of the four research questions. The only research question that did not have the added benefit of quantitative data was research question 4 which specifically asked, “What are the Company Officers’ recommendations for enhancing their own role and contribution to the mission of the United States Naval Academy.” This research question was answered thoroughly through a qualitative approach, only.

Data subset three consists of all the qualitative questions in the researcher’s questionnaire. The combination of these questions with the quantitative questions enabled the researcher to analyze the thesis questions from multiple perspectives. The specific questions that make up this subset are questions 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, and 18. Questions 2 and 3 are comparison questions based on the expectations of the job versus the reality. These two questions, specifically, address research questions 1 and 3: The role of the Company Officer and the biggest hindrances of their job. Questions 6 and 7 address where the Company Officers would like to spend more and less time, respectively. These two questions also help to answer research questions 1 and 3. Question 10, “In the execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?” specifically answers research question 3. Question 12, “What one word would describe your role as a Company Officer...?” addresses

research questions 1 and 3. Questions 15 and 16 ask the Company Officer what are his or her favorite things to do and least favorite things to do, respectively. The answers to these two questions also address research questions 1 and 3. Finally, Questions 17 and 18 ask what recommendations the Company Officer has for improving his or her position and what recommendations the Company Officer has for future Company Officers. These questions answer research question 4: "What are the Company Officers' recommendations for enhancing their own role and contribution to the Mission of the United States Naval Academy?"

Correspondence between the research and survey questions is displayed in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: RESEARCH SURVEY COMPARISON**

<b>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b>	<b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>	
	Qualitative	Quantitative
<b>Research Question 1</b> "The Role of the Company Officer...."	2,3,4,6,7,12,15,16	5,13,14
<b>Research Question 2</b> "How do Current Company Officers feel the LEAD Program prepared them...."		11
<b>Research Question 3</b> "What factors are the biggest hindrances to the Company Officer...."	2,3,6,7,10,12,15,16,17,18	8,9
<b>Research Question 4</b> "What are the Company Officers' recommendations for enhancing their own role and contribution to the mission...."	17,18	

From the table, it is obvious to see that there was some significant overlap regarding which research question was being answered by which subset question. This type of redundancy added to the strength of the research because the researcher was able to use different subset questions to answer a variety of thesis questions. Therefore, this

format reduced the chance of not having an answer to a particular research question. With this analysis, all research questions were answered thoroughly with the use of the questionnaire method.

#### **D. DATA ANALYSIS**

It took approximately one month to collect all of the questionnaires from the Company Officers. In order to glean the findings from the questionnaires a process called the “Grounded Theory Approach” was utilized. This approach is designed for “identifying categories and concepts that emerge from text, and linking the concepts into substantive and formal theories” (Bernard, 2000; p. 443). This process was developed by sociologists and has been used in areas of clinical and counseling psychology, business administration, and criminology (Bernard, 2000). The basic mechanics, for implementing the grounded theory, are relatively simple. First, a researcher must have some material from which to read and “identify potential analytical categories—that is, potential themes—that arise” (Bernard, 2000; p. 443). As these findings (themes) start to materialize, the next step is to juxtapose all the data on the particular findings. The researcher should look to see how the findings may or may not be related. Finally, the researcher should look for a theoretical model that explains his or her findings, and the researcher should report his or her results by using quotes from their written work. One of the keys to this grounding technique is the art of memoing:

Throughout the grounded theory process, you keep a running note about the coding and potential hypothesis and new directions for research. Grounded theory is an iterative process by which you, the analyst, become more and more grounded in the data. During the process you come to understand more and more deeply how whatever you’re studying really works (Bernard, 2000; p. 444).

This process of coding worked extremely well during the analysis of the data from all of the 30 Company Officers' questionnaires. When the researcher immersed himself in the data, certain findings were imminently apparent. These findings will be fully explained and analyzed in the proceeding chapter.

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## **IV. CURRENT ROLE OF THE COMPANY OFFICER**

Most of what I was concerned about was the ability to interact with midshipmen on a daily basis, to influence their decisions and way of thinking when need be, and to provide a positive influence and role model. I was also expecting (hoping?) for some autonomy in how I ran the company...with the leeway to make decisions and enforce accountability...(Company Officer, 2000).

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In this research study, a number of questions were specifically tailored to elicit information from the Company Officers regarding their daily routine. This chapter reports a synthesis of all these specific questions, and will describe a typical day for a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. However, prior to this section there is a portion of this chapter that describes the demographics of the Company Officer pool. The men and women who are Company Officers consistently rotate in and out of these coveted positions every year. This report has captured a "snap shot" for the Company Officers from August of 2000 to May of 2001. Therefore, it is important for the reader to be cognizant of the demographics because a simple change in this area could possibly alter the findings. Also, this chapter will highlight the impact the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program had on Company Officers in their preparation for their current positions. This portion of the chapter will analyze how the Company Officers felt the LEAD Program helped them in a variety of areas: *midshipmen counseling, mentoring, administrative work, the building of company cohesion, personal leadership skills, interaction with superiors, and the organizing of committees and team projects.* Finally, this chapter will examine, in detail, the findings discovered from the

research conducted on the role of the Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy. These findings will prove to be very informative and enlightening. For some, they may seem insipid, but for others they may be surprising.

## **B. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Today's Naval Service requires the enlistment of many different types of people with many diverse skills, to fill the numerous and varied positions of the Navy and Marine Corps. The United States Naval Academy helps in this endeavor by ensuring that midshipmen are exposed, as much as possible, to a very diversified staff of officers and enlisted during their four years at the Naval Academy. It is the hope that these young men and women, during these formative years, have the opportunity to associate with aviators, Marines, surface warfare officers, submariners, and countless others. Through this cross-pollination process, midshipmen may find an area of the Naval Service that really draws them or, conversely, they may find an area to which they have a complete aversion. Nevertheless, this process enables the midshipmen to make a more informed decision about their future in the Naval Service. In an effort to help this association, the staff of Company Officers in the 2000-2001 period consisted of a variety of Navy and Marine Officers from diverse backgrounds and specialties. Table 2 gives a quick synopsis of the demographic data from this time period.

**TABLE 2: COMPANY OFFICER OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY**

Military Occupational Specialty	Male	Female	Total
Navy Pilot	1	1	2
Surface Warfare Officer	6	2	8
Naval Flight Officer	4	2	6
Submariner	6	0	6
Special Warfare	1	0	1
Marine Corps Infantry	2	0	2
Marine Pilot	1	0	1
Marine Artillery	2	0	2
Marine Aviation Intelligence	0	1	1
Marine Communications Officer	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>

From the table above, it is clear that there are a variety of officers from many different types of communities and backgrounds represented at the Naval Academy. With such a diverse group of officers, the administration at the Naval Academy seeks to disperse the different communities throughout the Brigade of Midshipmen. For instance, the Brigade of Midshipmen consists of six battalions; therefore, with seven Marines assigned as Company Officers one Marine was allotted to each battalion with one battalion having two. This type of dispersion was not only instituted for Marines, but also with regards to gender and every possible warfare specialty listed above. At the time

of this study, this diversification was not perfect. There was one battalion that had two female officers and one battalion that had no female officers. However, on average, the Naval Academy administration did a fairly sufficient job in diversifying each battalion so that all midshipmen could hopefully see someone from a different community. Through this process, the Naval Academy facilitated the interaction of a variety of officers with a countless number of midshipmen, while concurrently providing them with potential role models and mentors.

It is important to note that every one of these Company Officers assigned to the Naval Academy at the time of this study had already completed, at a minimum, one tour in the fleet. The minimum commissioned time of a Company Officer was 5 years, and the most was 13 years. The mean years of commissioned service for all the Company Officers was 8.37. Therefore, this emphasizes that even though many of the Company Officers seem young, on average, they do come to the Naval Academy with a sizable amount of time and experience in the fleet.

For most of the Company Officers surveyed, the time on the job varied. The minimum time on the job was 3 months and the maximum was 20 months. The average period of time for the Company Officers was calculated to be 11.93 months or approximately one year. The tour of a Company Officer is technically supposed to last 24 months. Thus, having captured the data at the midpoint of the tour added some credibility to the findings. These officers, on average, had accrued the requisite amount of time on the job to really understand their role.

## **C. COMPANY OFFICER DAILY ROUTINE**

One of the original assumptions of the researcher prior to this study was that the Company Officers' daily routines, more than likely, varied from officer to officer. However, through the synthesis of all the questionnaire data, gathered from the 30 Company Officers, certain patterns began to emerge regarding their daily routine. In order to thoroughly explain the duties and tasks that most Company Officers perform on a daily basis, the day is divided into morning, noon, and afternoon.

### **1. Morning Time**

With the input of all the Company Officers, common themes emerged from the typical morning routine. On average, the Company Officer arrives at work around 0648. The earliest consistent arrival time is 0500, and the latest is 0700. The morning routine for nearly all of the Company Officers is very similar. Many of the Company Officers stated that the very first thing they do in the morning prior to meeting anyone is check the litany of email in their inbox. From this point, most of the Company Officers conduct a turnover with the incoming and outgoing First Class Duty Officers, and/or meet with the Company Commander to pass any information. A few of the Company Officers actually would go to breakfast with their midshipmen on a regular basis, while others regularly dined with their midshipmen during the noon meal. Nevertheless, once the midshipmen depart for class the Company Officer routine begins to vary.

Nearly all of the Company Officers are tasked with either teaching a section of Leadership or the First Class Capstone Course in Luce Hall. A majority of the Company Officers taught their class in the morning and this class lasted approximately one hour.

Some Company Officers spent the morning preparing for their class, while others prepared the day prior. In addition to the teaching requirement, the Company Officers also met with their Battalion Officers between two and three times a week. The length and frequency of these meetings varied from battalion to battalion.

In addition to teaching, Command Duty Officer turnovers, and Battalion meetings, many of the Company Officers detailed how the remainder of the morning was generally consumed with administrative work. A few of the Company Officers in the Brigade dedicated approximately one hour in the morning for exercise. Most of the Company Officers, however, would exercise over lunch or during the afternoon classes. Overall, the morning routine for the Company Officers seems to consist of five major items: checking email, teaching class, attending Battalion meetings, doing administrative work, and conducting First Class Duty turnover. However, the noon time period, 1200-1330, is when most of the Company Officers attempt to meet and talk with their midshipmen.

## **2. Noon Time**

Most of the Company Officers describe the noon period as, "the best time to catch individual midshipmen." With the midshipmen at class from approximately 0800 to 1145, and the Company Officer involved in both teaching class and attending meetings, this leaves little time for both parties to be in the same spot at the same time. That is why the lunch hour is so critical for both the midshipmen and the Company Officer. Many of the Company Officers observe noon meal formation on a regular basis, as well as eat with the midshipmen in King Hall. A few of the Company Officers stated that they dealt with

more midshipmen from 1130-1330 than of any other time period during the day. This is very logical because it is a time when both the midshipmen and the Company Officer are collocated. Once the afternoon classes begin, however, Bancroft Hall becomes sparse with midshipmen.

### **3. Afternoon**

Many of the Company Officers use this seemingly slow time in the afternoon to exercise. In addition to exercising, nearly all of the Company Officers continue to work on administrative matters and issues dealing with midshipmen. Many have described the afternoon duties as being very similar to their morning duties: counseling individual midshipmen, interfacing with the Battalion Officer, teaching and exercising. However, once class is out, nearly all the Company Officers are involved with either going to watch their midshipmen at intramurals or they are involved as Officer Representatives (O-Reps) for a particular sport. Watching midshipmen on the intramural teams or being an O-Rep gives the Company Officer a chance to get out of the office and visit the individual midshipmen in his or her Company. All of the Company Officers at the Naval Academy assiduously attempt to be involved whenever they can with midshipmen. They know that the midshipman's time is limited and therefore do their best to find time to meet and interact with their midshipmen. On average, most of the Company Officers depart work on a regular basis around 1730. However, some Company Officers stay, consistently, past 1830. It is important to note that often times there are events during the evening, which require the Company Officer's attendance. Therefore, the Company Officer may

go home for a short time only to return a few hours later to attend a mandatory social or educational function with midshipmen.

Table 3 describes the average amount of time the Company Officer spends with each of the common areas. This information was gathered from the 30 Company Officers and helps to describe what typically transpires during the day.

**TABLE 3: HOURS SPENT PER DAY ON EACH OF THE EVENTS**

EVENT	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN
Administrative Work	1	5	2.68
Meetings	.2	2	.983
Observing Sporting Events	0	3	1.06
Discussions with the Battalion Officer	.15	1.17	.51
Interacting with the Academic Department	0	2	.33
Personal Physical Fitness	.33	2.0	1.08
Conduct/ Honor cases	0	2.00	.58
Company Officer Arrival Time	0500	0700	0648
Company Officer Departure Time	1630	1900	1736

It is very clear from the table that there are significant differences in the amount of time each Company Officer spends in the particular categories. Some Company Officers spend five hours a day conducting administrative work, while others spend only one hour a day. Nevertheless, the table provides some quantified information, which can help to mollify some of the concerns that incoming Company Officers may have about their upcoming role.

#### **D. LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

This unique program was jointly designed by NPS and USNA to prepare officers for the responsibilities of a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy, and as leaders throughout their careers, through graduate education based on current practices, accepted theory, and research. The program is taught by faculty who are knowledgeable in a wide range of disciplines including group dynamics, information technology, ethics, trend analysis and Department of Defense policy. Graduates receive a Master of Science in Leadership and Human Resource Development from the Naval Postgraduate School upon successful completion of course work and a thesis (USNA web site, 2001).

This study specifically asked the Company Officers to rate how the Leadership Education and Development Program helped prepare each of them for their role as a Company Officer in the following areas: *midshipmen counseling, midshipmen mentoring, administrative work, the building of company cohesion, personal leadership skills, interaction with superiors, and the organization of committee and team projects.*

Out of the thirty Company Officers surveyed, 26 of them had completed the course work required by the LEAD Program. A few of the Company Officers, at the time of the survey, still had to finish their thesis requirement. Nevertheless, the information gathered from the 26 Company Officers who had completed the course work proved to be educational and insightful.

A Likert scale was used to measure their responses and it consisted of three points: 3) Was Extremely Helpful, 2) Was Moderately Helpful, 1) Was of No Help. In order to keep the data from being skewed by the four Company Officers who did not attend this program, a final point was added: 4) Not Applicable (Did not Attend the LEAD Program). However, the responses from 26 Company Officers who had completed the course work provided the researcher with a copious amount of information.

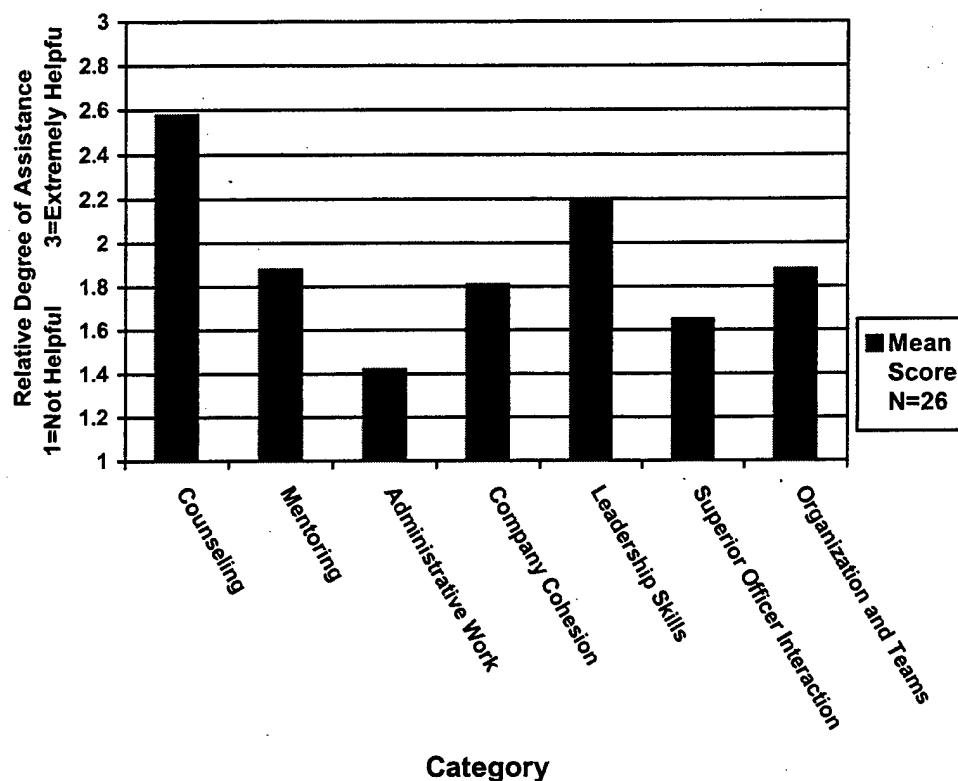
The process for analyzing this particular data will begin first with detailed look at the overall responses followed by some anecdotal responses from the Company Officers in regards to the LEAD Program. With this being stated, Table 4 provides a “mean” score for all of the categories listed above.

**TABLE 4: MEAN SCORE OF TWENTY-SIX COMPANY OFFICERS WHO HAD COMPLETED THE LEAD PROGRAM AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY**

<p><b>Question:</b> Identify how the Leadership Education and Development Program helped you prepare for being a Company Officer in the following areas.</p> <p>3 = Was Extremely Helpful      2 = Was Moderately Helpful      1 = Was of No Help</p>			
<b>RESULTS OF TWENTY-SIX COMPANY OFFICERS (N=26)</b>			
CATEGORY	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN
Midshipmen mentoring	1	3	1.88
Administrative work	1	3	1.42
The building of company cohesion	1	3	1.81
Personal leadership skills	1	3	2.19
Interaction with senior officers	1	3	1.65
Organization of committee and team projects	1	3	1.88
Midshipmen counseling	1	3	2.58

A graphical view of Figure 1 allows the reader to easily juxtapose all categories.

**Figure 1: Company Officers' perceptions of the relative degree of assistance the LEAD Program had on their role as Company Officers**



By simply comparing the categories, the two areas that the 26 Company Officers felt the LEAD Program helped them the most was with *midshipmen counseling* and the development of *personal leadership skills*. These two categories are much closer to the mark of "3" than any of the other 5 categories. Four of the remaining five categories also scored relatively close to "2," which denotes that the LEAD Program was "moderately helpful." These areas consisted of *mentoring midshipmen, building company cohesion, interacting with superior officers, and organizing committee and team projects*. *Administrative work*, the last area, scored closer to "1" than did any of the other categories. Simply stated, the 26 Company Officers who had completed a majority of the

program, believed that it did not improve their administrative skills. Overall, however, the mean results of the Company Officers demonstrated that, through the Company Officers' perception, the LEAD Program helped them considerably in a number of areas, which leads to part two of this topic: The Company Officers' comments.

To be honest, I feel that the LEAD program is focused properly and does not need to place further emphasis on administrative skills or mentoring. I feel that these are heavily determinant on professional expertise that can only be gained through real operational experience. I do feel that the LEAD program is extremely complimentary to military experience and will continue to strengthen me as a leader in the future.

Other Company Officers expounded on this idea of administrative work and the LEAD Program in more of a laconic fashion.

I don't think administrative work should be covered at all in the LEAD program. You should know how to handle that stuff by now. The LEAD program did educate me somewhat on interaction with superiors and organization of team projects, I just have not needed to use that skill yet. I already had an adequate base of knowledge in those areas to handle this job.

This cogent argument was made after the Company Officer was asked what the LEAD Program could do to strengthen the areas that they marked a "1": "Was of no help." It must be noted that in the present LEAD curriculum, professors do not discuss or teach administrative matters with regards to Navy or Marine Corps protocol nor, as stated by the above Company Officer should they. The reason for making *administrative duties* a subset of the LEAD question was to elicit a response from the Company Officers regarding an important aspect of their job. There is a significant amount of writing that takes place throughout the LEAD curriculum and it was the hypothesis of the researcher that some Company Officers may have felt that their administrative skills improved because of this fact. However, empirically that was not the case.

Some Company Officers provided recommendations that were more incisive and detailed, while simultaneously hinting at a few perceived problems.

Administrative work: The LEAD program has no concept of what the job actual(ly) entailed since there is no document of what is required for us to do. Maybe now with all the theses written up on it, there will be modifications to the program.

Personal leadership skills: The LEAD program gave me the tools and helped me identify my own personal style and introduced me to many others, however, I do not believe that it helped me in my style since even though I am given the tools I am unable to use them.

Midshipmen Mentoring: Worked great at the one-on-one level, especially within my classes that I taught, but as my company as a whole, very little mentoring due to the lack of time I can spend with each midshipman individually or even as a class. The most interaction I have to mentor, is professionally during second semester when service assignment is right around the corner and especially after they service select, for detailed info.

Team Projects/Building Cohesion: Moderately helpful. Only worked well in small groups in the classroom for me. Implementing at the company level requires much more time than the midshipmen or I had, especially trying to learn my job at the same time.

In general, the Company Officers who provided these anecdotal examples seem to speak positively about the education they received in the LEAD Program. They point out how some of the tools they learned in the classroom worked well for them when dealing with a small number of midshipmen, yet they also describe some of their perceived limitations: time with midshipmen, lack of knowledge about the Company Officer role, and lack of perceived ability to use the leadership tools they have learned. A couple of these ideas will be addressed later in the study, but it is important to recognize that these particular responses provide a foreshadowing to some significant overarching concerns with regards to the role of the Company Officer.

A few of the Company Officers' responses were less positive about the LEAD Program.

The skills an officer develops in the fleet, and the experiences in leadership that a well-trained and groomed officer brings to the job from the fleet are more than adequate to ensure success.

Even though this Company Officer offered their individual perspective as to how fleet experience adequately prepares an individual to be a successful Company Officer, they still gave relatively high marks to the LEAD Program in the areas of *midshipmen counseling, mentoring*, and in the development of *personal leadership skills*. The interpretation of this dichotomy of answers relays the perception that for some, the LEAD Program was an added benefit but was not necessarily the one item that made them successful in their role as a Company Officer.

This portion of the research highlights that there are Company Officers who have thought highly of the LEAD Program, and there are others who relay specific recommendations for the LEAD Program, while hinting at some perceived problems. Now, there will be presented a statement by a Company Officer that describes what he or she perceived to be a problem with regards to the LEAD Program in conjunction with the United States Naval Academy.

The LEAD Program was great and will probably benefit me greatly in the civilian community. Since Company Officers have no authority and get crushed quickly when they try to apply the many positive techniques learned in the LEAD Program. Old habits die hard here. This place (The United States Naval Academy) is not quite ready for 20<sup>th</sup> Century leadership, yet let alone (the) 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The LEAD Program is far too advanced for this place. I hope the fleet will be more flexible.

Through a couple of these personal accounts there has been an ominous tone that the Company Officers have revealed about their interaction with the administration. These ideas will be examined more thoroughly in the findings portion of this study.

"How do the current Company Officers feel the LEAD Program prepared them for their current role as Company Officers?" To summarize this question in one word or

phrase would be an injustice to the 26 Company Officers that attended the LEAD Program. Through the course of this study the researcher used aspects of analysis that provided quantitative results for a qualitative question. In this regards, the study indicated that, in general, the Company Officers feel that the LEAD Program had helped them in a number of areas. Some of these areas received higher markings on the questions than did others but, for the most part, the LEAD Program received positive marks in the quantitative summary.

With regards to the personal remarks by the Company Officers, there was a similar trend. The Company Officers were asked how the LEAD Program could adapt to better assist the future Company Officers in the areas, they marked "1" (Was of no help). Some answered that the LEAD Program really did not need to change. A resounding number of Company Officers felt as though the LEAD Program had not helped them with regards to administrative work and some of these same Company Officers felt that the LEAD Program should not attempt to address this issue. Many of these officers felt that a person learns how to do administrative work in the fleet and when he or she comes to the Naval Academy they should already be proficient in this area.

Nevertheless, the overall, qualitative remarks to this specific question also seemed to be generally positive while, at the same time, some of the personal statements foreshadowed perceived problems that will be discussed later in this study. Overall, it is reasonable to say that the mission of the LEAD Program, "to prepare officers for the responsibilities of a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy, and as leaders throughout their careers, through graduate education based on current practices, accepted

theory, and research," is being accomplished through the eyes of the Company Officers from the 2000-2001 time period.

## E. FINDINGS OVERVIEW

In the following pages of this research, a number of findings discovered through the course of this study will be discussed in great detail. It behooves the researcher, at this point, to remind the reader why he embarked on this course of study. The Company Officer at the Naval Academy is in a position to influence either positively or negatively a countless number of midshipmen. In the case of the researcher, as with other midshipmen at the time, it was the leadership of a previous Company Officer that inspired him to become a Marine Officer. For other midshipmen, they too may have been inspired by a Company Officer to become a pilot, submariner, or Surface Warfare Officer. Nevertheless, the relative impact a Company Officer can have on midshipmen at the Naval Academy is substantial. Therefore, it is the hope of the researcher, that this study will provide two very large and overarching outcomes.

First, with the description of both the Company Officer's daily routine and the findings, hopefully, future Company Officers will be more informed about what to expect when they start the job. Secondly, it is the hope of the researcher, that through the detailed analysis of the findings, perhaps, changes can be instituted at the Naval Academy to enhance the role and impact that Company Officers have on midshipmen.

Classification of a "finding" was not constituted by one or two Company Officers stating a common idea. A finding, according to the researcher, was determined by having over half of all the Company Officers describe a similar aspect of their job. In some

instances, the amount of Company Officer responses that constituted a finding ranged as high as 90 percent, while other times the finding constituted only 50 percent of the Company Officers.

The researcher held steadfast to the belief that in order to make changes and possible improvements in any role, first an understanding of the role must be acquired. Secondly, the facts and perceptions of the role must be presented in an unfiltered and objective manner. Only when this is done, will the higher echelon of decision makers have all the facts necessary to make a thorough analysis of the situation. Therefore, the following is a description of the findings gleaned from the Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy.

#### **F. FINDING I: COMPANY OFFICERS FEEL AS THOUGH THEY LACK THE QUALITY TIME TO SPEND WITH MIDSHIPMEN**

##### **1. Finding**

One of the general assumptions the researcher had prior to this study was that, of all the officers stationed at the Naval Academy, the Company Officer would most likely be the person who spent the greatest amount of time dealing with midshipmen on an individual basis. By no means did the research expect 90 percent of the Company Officers would state emphatically that they wished they could have more time to spend with the midshipmen. The analysis of this finding will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will discuss what organizational structures are in place that perpetuate an atmosphere where Company Officers feel they are not able to interact with midshipmen on a quality level. The second phase will consist of vignettes from Company Officers that relay, first hand, the feelings and emotions they have about this finding. Upon

completion of this analysis the reader will have a deeper understanding of this finding as perceived through the eyes of the Company Officer.

## **2. Phase I: Organizational Structures**

When the Company Officers arrive at work around 0630, reveille time for midshipmen, the Company Officers have approximately 90 minutes before the midshipmen begin their first class. During this time, the midshipmen must conduct personal hygiene, take accountability, and eat breakfast. This leaves little time for the Company Officer to interact with many of the midshipmen. In fact, many of the Company Officers spend this time either debriefing the First Class Duty Officer or talking with the Company Commanders and their staffs. Once class time begins the midshipmen are absent from Bancroft Hall nearly the entire day, except for a small period of time around noon meal. After the midshipmen's last class around 1530, they go to either a varsity sport or an intramural event. Physical fitness is extremely important at the United States Naval Academy and participating in some athletic event is mandatory for all midshipmen. This sports period consumes a majority of the late afternoon for the midshipmen and after they have showered, changed clothes, and attended evening meal, they find that there is not much left of the day.

The rigorous academic curriculum of the Naval Academy challenges even the "best and brightest" that come to this institution. Often times, midshipmen will find themselves studying extremely late into the night just trying to accomplish assignments for the next day. This tumultuous schedule takes its toll physically on the midshipmen, who are often found fast asleep with their head down on a desk or on a couch during a

fifteen-to thirty-minute break from class. This cursory overview of a midshipmen's life demonstrates that, in the course of a midshipmen's typical day, they have so much to do that interacting with a Company Officer is the last item on their list, if it is even on their list. This idea was stated succinctly by a Company Officer, "I am able to interact somewhat with the midshipmen on a daily basis, but it is incredibly hard. The demands on their time are crazy." Therefore, the onus is on the Company Officer to try and find time to interact with the midshipmen and this can be a challenge for the Company Officer who is also very busy keeping up with all 140 midshipmen in the company.

### **3. Phase II: Company Officers' Statements**

While you do have a role in the lives of your midshipmen, there just isn't enough time to affect each and every one of their lives. They are so busy, and you are so busy with collateral duties, teaching, O-repping (slang for officer representative for a sports team), etc. You just don't have enough contact time with the midshipmen as I thought I would.

This finding: Company Officers wishing they had more time with midshipmen, was an observation noted with 90 percent of the Company Officers surveyed, and is by far, the most resounding finding that emerged from this study. The question that the researcher had in analyzing this finding was "why?" Why is it that the Company Officer, the person who is supposed to be "in the trenches" with these midshipmen, the person who is, according to the Proceedings Magazine in 1935, supposed to be the one who is "pointed toward giving the midshipmen the officer attitude through wise counsel, sound advice" not able to find the quality time to spend with the midshipmen? A portion of this question has already been answered by looking at the midshipman's daily routine, but it would simply be trite to say that the, "midshipmen are just too busy to interact with Company Officers." Many of the underlying reasons why the Company Officers feel this

way can be uncovered from their personal statements regarding this very matter. The following quotations by the Company Officers not only shed light on this issue, but they provide the reader with a first-hand account and understanding of the passionate feelings felt by the Company Officers regarding this topic.

Company Officers don't have enough quality time with midshipmen in their company. To make time with midshipmen, you must interrupt their schedules because no time is allotted for you. Therefore, you don't have as much impact on the company as a whole as you would like. Instead, you concentrate on as many midshipmen as you possibly can to maximize your time and influence.

This statement and the subsequent statement are both didactic in nature. The Company Officer in the following response provides ways with which he or she overcomes this challenge of time with midshipmen.

I get very little direct interaction with the midshipmen. I make time to see the midshipmen in my company by visiting their rooms and standing in the hallway between classes. I eat lunch/dinner with them 3-4 times per week. Additionally, I make the time to see them at least once a week at the Friday afternoon formation to give a safety brief. I even have personal counselings. However, the company is just too large to know each intimately.

In addition to these instructional descriptions, one Company Officer also discussed how some of these methods to meet midshipmen impacted their own personal time.

There is not much free time at all. With counseling, classes, admissions board, officer O-repping, and other collateral duties...the schedule is usually packed and leaves little time for extra curricular (activities).

There is a trend. Both the Company Officers and the midshipmen are extremely busy and therefore they seem to be missing each other, even though they work relatively close to one another. A few more illustrations from the Company Officers reveal their candor and disappointment about the lack of quality time they have with midshipmen.

I expected to have a lot more time with my midshipmen. I was not prepared for how hard it is to get those quality moments with them. So much of their time is taken up by classes and mandatory crap...so much so, that by the time I get to talk to them, so many of them are so cynical that it's hard to break through that shell and really reach them.

However, when a Company Officer does find the time to really reach a midshipman they may describe it in the following manner: "The professional reward comes when I see 'one or two' actually get it, vice the fulfillment that I expected to receive after the light bulb came on for the entire company."

With 140 midshipmen it is impossible to really get to know them well. You know maybe half of them well and the other half you pray that you don't need to make a recommendation because you don't have anything to base your opinion. You just don't have enough face time with them. Their schedules are so busy that they might see you on average two or three minutes a week. Many midshipmen are intimidated by officers because of the authoritative system we have in place so they try to avoid you. If you don't make an effort to get out to them you will become an "invisible" Company Officer. That is easy to do because of all the different taskers that come your way.

Some of the best information regarding this issue comes from the uncensored statements of the Company Officers. For instance, when one Company Officer was asked where he would like to spend more time, he alluded back to the finding.

I would like to spend more time counseling midshipmen. Although I spend most of my time on only a few of my midshipmen, I would like to interact with all of them. This would require about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour each (x 135 adds up). There just is no way feasible when you include meetings, paperwork, preparing for class, getting ready for summer activities. The best free time for midshipmen is between 0700 and first period, over noon meal, and after class until intramurals. It would take months to counsel everyone, but that is why I rely on my midshipmen staff.

It is very obvious, from these personal statements, that finding quality time to spend with midshipmen is a definite challenge for Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy.

I never thought it would be so hard to get a portion of the midshipmen's time. For example, I literally have to fight with numerous competing events to schedule something as simple as 30 minutes of fitness report training for all 1/C midshipmen in the company. I often get the sense that scheduling time with the Company Officer is lowest on the priority list for the Naval Academy.

This Company Officer went on to describe where they would like to spend more of their time and the following statement explains, once again, how the Company Officer cannot reach all the midshipmen.

I would like more time to be able to have discussions with the midshipmen. Right now, I primarily interact with the First Class leadership and the midshipmen who are in "trouble" (academic, conduct, etc.). There are approx. 120 midshipmen in my Company who I do not meet with on a regular basis.

When one Company Officer was asked to compare their expectations of the job versus the realities of the job, again, the aspect of interaction or lack of interaction was eloquently stated.

Originally, I thought I'd be able to influence all of the midshipmen in my Company in a positive way. Perhaps I have but I've realized that I can only spend time with a certain percentage of my folks. I tend to spend time with the First Class in key leadership positions and the people who tend to get into trouble. Between these two groups, I "miss" about 70 percent of the company. "Miss" refers to a lack of consistent interaction.

Another Company Officer answered this question in a different way, but still highlighted his lack of interaction with midshipmen.

I thought I'd be in command of 140 midshipmen; responsible for fostering their moral, mental, and physical development. I expected I'd be a role model, mentor, teacher, leader, and manager. I'm not really even in command of myself, much less the 140 midshipmen. The Company Officer plays but a minor role in most midshipmen's lives. The faculty and coaching staffs see and have an ability to influence midshipmen to a much higher degree than any of the Company Officers. I have little ability to positively influence a midshipman, I can only punish. The Battalion Officer has the only real authority.

By reading these descriptive statements that discuss just how few midshipmen the Company Officer actually interacts with makes it very obvious that this finding is very real and a challenge to nearly all of the Company Officers.

Overall, The discourse of this finding has taken the reader through a number of phases. Phase I consisted of a description of some of the organizational constraints, which facilitate the lack of quality interaction between the midshipmen and the Company Officers. These constraints consisted of the rigorous academic and athletic schedules that the midshipmen adhere to, along with the multitude of mandatory functions and formations that take up time for both the Company Officers and the midshipmen. Phase II consisted of a number of personal statements from the Company Officers. These statements add both credibility and a degree of passion to this finding. Some potential recommendations to help mollify part of this challenge will be discussed later in the study.

#### **G. FINDING II: COMPANY OFFICERS HAVE INSUFFICIENT AUTONOMY TO LEAD AND MANAGE EFFECTIVELY.**

"If you could make changes in your job as a Company Officer what would they be?"

More autonomy. Let me approve somebody to come back after the 2000 Sunday formation and my word or approval should be enough. Why wouldn't it be? I can shoot live missiles into real people but I'm not capable of granting a 2-hour extension of liberty for some guy who is a great performer and wants to help lead a Sunday night bible study. Give me a break.

Sixty-three percent of all the Company Officers addressed the lack of autonomy they have in their current position. The analysis of this finding will also be conducted in two phases. The first phase will consist of a multitude of vignettes that will reveal both

the uncensored frustration felt by many of the Company Officers along with the aspects of the job the Company Officers feel they have little authority over. The second phase will analyze the relative impact that a perceived lack of autonomy has on leadership.

### **1. Phase I: Company Officers' Comments**

The most common area that a preponderance of Company Officers felt they had no authority over was that of rewards and punishments. This was highlighted in a Company Officer's response to the following question: In the execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?

Approval authority of special requests...A waste of my time to route chits above my level as required by MIDREGS (Midshipmen Regulations). If I would've routed similar requests above my pay grade in the (Fleet) I would have been relieved for cause as being incompetent and incapable of making simple decisions about my people. This approval authority and centralized command of the Naval Academy is antithetical to the special trust and confidence given to officers in any of my previous commands. Insulting and patronizing to someone who literally made life and death decisions....

Another Company Officer expressed a similar view when answering the very same question: In the Execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?

Lack of authority. I often feel like a puppet. As a JO...I feel that I had more responsibility than I do here. Everything we do is dictated for us. From writing people up to what punishments we are going to give them. We can't even approve a chit for someone to miss class or return late on a Sunday evening without the authority of the Battalion Officer. I really don't see the need for a Company Officer. I think the Battalion Officers could pass word to the midshipmen Company Commanders just as easily.

Both of these officers are specifically addressing the lack of approval authority over, what seems to be, very innocuous requests. These seem to be innocuous requests because Company Officers are highly qualified to perform these duties. All of these

officers have experienced a minimum of one tour in the fleet. Some, especially a few of the O-4s, have been on two or even three tours through the fleet and to not afford them authority to approve a special request such as this is difficult to accept for many of the officers. Especially since all the officers assigned as Company Officers were given greater responsibility and authority in their previous assignments.

Low Company Officer autonomy is also an impediment. A lot of final approval authority and decision-making is made at the O-5 level and above. This is too senior in my view for a majority of cases. Often times, I feel like a puppet.

This common idea that some insignificant decisions require either Battalion Officer approval or the Commandant's approval were found in a number of the questionnaires returned by the Company Officers. However, a few Company Officers stated that when they would approach their Battalion Officer for approval of something they would usually find the Battalion Officer was amenable to their requests.

I do feel like I am capable of making some decisions that are referred to the Battalion Officers but in only rare occasions has my Battalion Officer not granted my requests.

As the reader can see, the level of passion felt about this topic varied with each Company Officer. In response to a question regarding changes that could be made at the Academy, one Company Officer demonstrated the relative indifference he or she had about this topic of autonomy.

I can't really think of any. Maybe give the Company Officers more autonomy to make little decisions like liberty and privileges and study hour. I think some of the things that the Commandant worries about should be done at our level.

Some Company Officers talked about "teaching points" and the perceived lack of trust they felt from the administration. The Company Officers want to have the opportunity to counsel midshipmen when they make mistakes, but some feel as though

there is tremendous amount of pressure from the administration to keep midshipmen from making mistakes.

The zero-defect mentality is alive and well. The administration talks about “empowering midshipmen,” but Company and Battalion Officers take heat for anything that goes wrong (i.e. midshipmen who don’t run a computer survey or pick up their laundry). This leads to a choice of either micro managing the midshipmen to ensure that everything is done in a specific way, or letting them make some mistakes and actually learn. I thought USNA would be about developing officers and military professionals, but the primary focus is on academic grades and avoiding mistakes.

The next quote from another Company Officer relays their idea about the concept of “teaching points.”

I’ve also been disappointed in the lack of trust given by the administration. I believe we should give midshipmen the opportunity to lead. When they fail, we give them more guidance and hold them accountable if necessary. Too often CO’s are expected to attend special meals, football march-overs, etc because there is a fear the midshipmen will do something they’re not suppose to do in these settings. CO participation should happen for reasons other than fear....more of a mentor or supervisor role. In one sense, our leadership opportunities are every day in terms of how we interact with the midshipmen (positive, thought-provoking) and in another sense we tend to need to look for the “teaching moments” where we can instill a life lesson in the midst of the chaotic lifestyle. We have the opportunity to make the principles found in Naval Leadership case studies come alive.

Both of these quotes discuss the lack of trust that many of the Company Officers perceive from the administration. It is very similar to the lack of autonomy expressed in the previous vignettes; however, these last two highlight an important point. Both of these Company Officers feel that the administration does not trust them because the administration does not want the midshipmen to make mistakes. Therefore, the Company Officer will be on scene at every event not for mentoring purposes, but rather for police duties. This lack of autonomy/trust that is perceived by many of the Company Officers is counter to the philosophy that the Naval Academy is a “leadership laboratory.” If the

Naval Academy is truly that, then there needs to be a concentrated effort to ameliorate this perception.

To a certain degree all 30 Company Officers represent a subculture of the Naval Academy. A subculture is simply a group of people who agree on certain assumptions about their organization. "In fact, as we will see, with time any social unit will produce subunits that will produce subcultures as a normal process of evolution" (Schein, 1992; p.14). If conflicts arise between subcultures within an organization it is the function of the leadership to try and allay the strife between the groups.

Culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin in that leaders first create cultures when they create groups and organizations. Once cultures exist, they determine the criteria for leadership and thus determine who will or will not be a leader. But if a cultures become dysfunctional, it is the unique function of leadership to perceive the functional and dysfunctional elements of the existing culture and to manage cultural evolution and change in such a way that a group can survive in a changing environment (Schein, 1992; p.15).

The overriding perception at the United States Naval Academy by the Company Officers is that they lack the authority and the autonomy to really make a difference at their level. One Company Officer described the gap between their expectations of the job versus the reality of the job:

I thought I would have the autonomy and authority (much like I did in the fleet) to make the decisions and implement programs I felt I needed in order to develop midshipmen in the best possible manner. (Although) another Company Officer said it best when they said "The hardest part about becoming a Company Officer is no longer being trusted, or having the ability to make simple decisions without the approval of an O-6.

I always felt the Company Officer position would be difficult, but my perception was that it would be because of the things midshipmen do. Rather it was the everyday dealings with post-command O-6s that are doing the jobs the O-3s should be doing.

As stated above, the feeling and perception of the Company Officers having a lack of autonomy was gleaned from 19 out of the 30 questionnaires. However, there were some Company Officers that made no reference to this perception anywhere in their survey, and there were still others that addressed this idea of autonomy in a positive fashion.

I feel that I have the ability to make most changes that I would like to and that my influence on midshipmen is not impeded by the academy structure/senior leadership. The only thing that I would desire is more time allotted to company training so that I could intensify my relationship with the midshipmen.

One Company Officer stated that they were tired of hearing the common complaint about autonomy. This is what they had to say on the issue:

The concept of autonomy is stupid. People bitch that they have no autonomy in their companies. Of course they don't. They work for a Battalion Officer who works for the Commandant. Sometimes the answer to why we're doing something is "because that's the way the one star wants it." That "challenge paradigms" stuff from LEAD only works to a certain degree and then it's time to think about being in the Navy. This whole autonomy gripe gets stale. This is a great job if you work within the parameters you've got and try to make a difference in some people's lives.

Another Company Officer described that "time" was their only impediment in dealing with midshipmen and tersely stated that if any other Company Officer stated something different they were just complaining: "Time with my midshipmen. It is the only impediment. (If) anybody gives you anything else as an impediment, they are whining...." Another Company Officer stated that they really could not find any significant job impediments. This officer also stated that if Company Officers had more

autonomy than they did, then there would be 30 Companies acting differently all the time.

In reality I don't feel like I have a lot of job impediments. I believe in the system so I try my best to carry out my duties the way the Commandant and my Battalion Officer want me to. Sure, I would like some autonomy in a couple of areas but then you have thirty Company Officers doing completely different things. For example, some Company Officers in the past would grant unlimited weekends to everyone while others follow the guidelines strictly:

However, some Company Officers had completely the opposite feeling about differences among the companies.

I would like to feel more empowered with respect to the control of my company. Why? Because there are many ways to accomplish the mission. At present, there are too many unenforceable rules that try to have each company operating the same or punishments that are consistent. Problem is that you have 30 Company Officers who think different and therefore cannot act consistently. Each Company Officer believes they can accomplish the mission their way or places more importance in one area of development than another.

It is very clear that there are differences of opinions on whether all thirty companies should or should not be uniform with regards to rewards and punishments. Without a doubt, this issue could be a very interesting philosophical debate. However, this research clearly highlighted that 63 percent of the Company Officer feel as though they lack the necessary authority to do their job effectively.

It is very obvious to the reader that some Company Officers are definitively more passionate about this subject than others. Some Company Officers simply allude to this problem of autonomy in one or two sentences, while others went into excruciating detail about the subject. Nevertheless, 30 Company Officers were independently queried and nearly two-thirds of them responded that the lack of authority within their role fettered

their efforts as a leader. Phase II of this analysis examines some of the potential negative effects this type of situation can have on leadership.

## **2. Phase II: Leadership ramifications**

A person is severely limited in his abilities to use his talents and abilities for the benefit of the company if he doesn't have the authority to put them into action. He will eventually lose his desire to use his talents if he is repeatedly blocked in his efforts to achieve success because of a lack of authority (Tracy, 1990; p. 32).

In Diane Tracy's book, 10 Steps To Empowerment, she details some of the perils of awarding responsibility to individuals without authority. As stated above in her quote, the loss of individual initiative and drive may be a subsequent result of this style of leadership. Tracy (1990) goes on further to state that one of the most common complaints she has heard in the workplace today, from people at all levels, is that they say, "I have the responsibility but I don't have the authority to get the job done." She unequivocally mentions, that this fact alone is one of the primary causes of stress and lack of productivity in the workplace. If a subordinate feels as though they lack the necessary authority commensurate with their job, they oftentimes become frustrated with the organization. The organization, in turn, is not getting the most out of their employee.

In hierarchical organizations using more traditional "command and control" management practices, the organization's human resource capacity is only partially tapped, perhaps 25 to 30 percent of capacity. And we all know what happens if equipment was utilized at only 25 to 30 percent of capacity. The company would suffer greatly...(Blanchard, Carlos, Randolph, 1999; p. 6).

Therefore, it would make sense, that in today's Navy, with all of the recruitment and retention problems, that the United States Naval Academy would want to get the very most out of their people. In fact, in a recent speech given by a former Chief of Naval

Operations, he credits the success of the current naval forces to the people in uniform. This speech demonstrates to all that one of the Navy's most important asset are the Sailors and Marines.

Throughout the year, our forward presence, forward engagement, and ability to respond to the full spectrum of crises, have kept us at the forefront of America's vital interests around the globe. Our successes — out forward and at home — have been the direct result of your remarkable skill and dedication. You are the finest Navy men and women the world has ever seen and you do incredibly important work for Navy and country each and every day. You should be very proud of that. (Admiral Jay L. Johnson, CNO, Navy birthday message to the fleet October 8, 1999 Washington, D.C.)

Therefore, with the manpower problems the Navy faces today, coupled with the need for quality people to ensure future success, it would behoove the Naval Service, as an organization, to try and get the very most out of each sailor and Marine.

In the conclusion of this finding, it is clear that there is a problem regarding the perceived lack of authority granted to the Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy. The sailors and Marines that make up the Naval Service are some of the most important assets. As they will be responsible for the past and future successes of the Naval Service, it is the Navy's duty to continue to reassess how best to achieve maximum results with the qualified individuals they have working within the ranks. Specifically, the Naval Academy should attempt to maximize the potential that exists within the Company Officer cohort.

#### **H. FINDING III: COMPANY OFFICERS RECEIVE TOO MANY "TASKERS" FROM OUTSIDE THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.**

When asked, "In the execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?", the following responses were typical.

Extra taskings: for some reason, everyone else in the Yard (USNA) thinks that we have the easiest job in the Yard and tasks us with extra collaterals (Service Related, Bancroft and Professional development).

One of my frustrations is the ability of anyone on the Yard to task Company Officers. We are probably the only people on the Yard that have this privilege. It would never happen in Academia but it happens to us all the time.

Being at the disposal of everyone on the Yard giving you "taskers."

Taskings from EVERYWHERE! Everyone wants something. People that do not work in Bancroft do not understand the policies. The canned answer is "See your Company Officer." Academic people saying that plebes can go to plays on Friday nights when they can't.

Fifty percent of the Company Officers specifically highlighted this issue in their survey. Furthermore, almost all of these types of responses came from the one question stated above. Therefore, this begs the question: What perpetuates these seemingly random taskings by people outside the Chain of Command? The crux of the problem is technology.

The advent of desktop computers, email and the "world-wide-web" has brought with it a multitude of benefits. Now people are able to communicate with one another more quickly and easily. Long past are the days when a person must pick up a phone or travel by foot to communicate with someone or give direction. In fact, all organizations must control some aspect of this burgeoning technology in order to stay viable in this rapidly changing environment. As Schein (1992) notes:

For an organization to cope effectively with a rapidly changing environment of the sort we see increasingly in today's global context, it must be able to (1) import information efficiently; (2) move that information to the right place in the organization, where it can be analyzed, digested, and acted upon; (3) make the necessary internal transformations to take account the new information; and (4) get feedback on the impacts of its new responses (Schein, 1992; p. 277).

Transferring the right information to the right people at the right time has helped numerous business and organizations throughout the ages. The Naval Service, along with countless other military organizations, is continuously looking at how new information technology (IT) systems can help them improve in both peace and war, and now with the assistance of computers and IT systems, this process can be accelerated and diversified. For example, prior to the conception of email, if a leader wanted to pass out information to a number of their employees the leader had to create numerous hard copies of the information and then require someone to personally deliver all of the information to the specified employees. However, now with email the leader can instantaneously send out the information to everyone at once. Therefore, the amount of human labor required to get "the right information to the right people at the right time" has significantly diminished. This is just one of the many positive characteristics that technology has brought to the work force. However, this ever-simplified method of communicating is not completely benign of negative attributes.

Prior to email, the effort that was required to distribute information to the right people reduced information overload. It required work to reproduce and pass out the information and no one wanted to waste their time getting this information to people who did not need it. However, now with email, everyone can receive all the information, all the time, whether they need it or not. This information overload can be a problem in any organization or business. At the Naval Academy, some of the Company Officers feel that the email system is responsible for this multitude of taskings. For instance, one Company Officer was asked the following question: "Conversely, describe three areas where you would like to spend less time and why?" The Company Officer's response

addresses this issue: “Emails...almost all tasking is done through email. It’s less personal and a lot of time is wasted reading through emails which aren’t relevant.” Another Company officer gave their opinion on emails in response to the very same question:

Writing emails. The email system controls everything at the Naval Academy. I feel like I don’t have my linus blanket if I am away from my email for longer than a few hours because someone may be sending me an email to come to this or that meeting.

The perception that anyone can email taskers to the Company Officers initiated this response to the following question, “If you could make changes in your job as a Company Officer what would they be?”

Tasking from other sources is always a problem. Seems like someone is always trying to get you to do something even if they are not in your chain. All I would ask is that tasking is routed through the usual channels.

In summary, this research found that 15 of the 30 Company Officers feel as though receiving taskers from many people at once is diverting their time and attention away from effectively leading midshipmen. Nearly all of these 15 Company Officers relayed their feelings on this issue in responses to one of the following questions: “In the execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?” or, “If you could make changes in your job as a Company Officer what would they be?” This focus of the Company Officers’ responses highlight that half of them feel as though this issue is a significant impediment and ameliorating this problem would be a great improvement to their job.

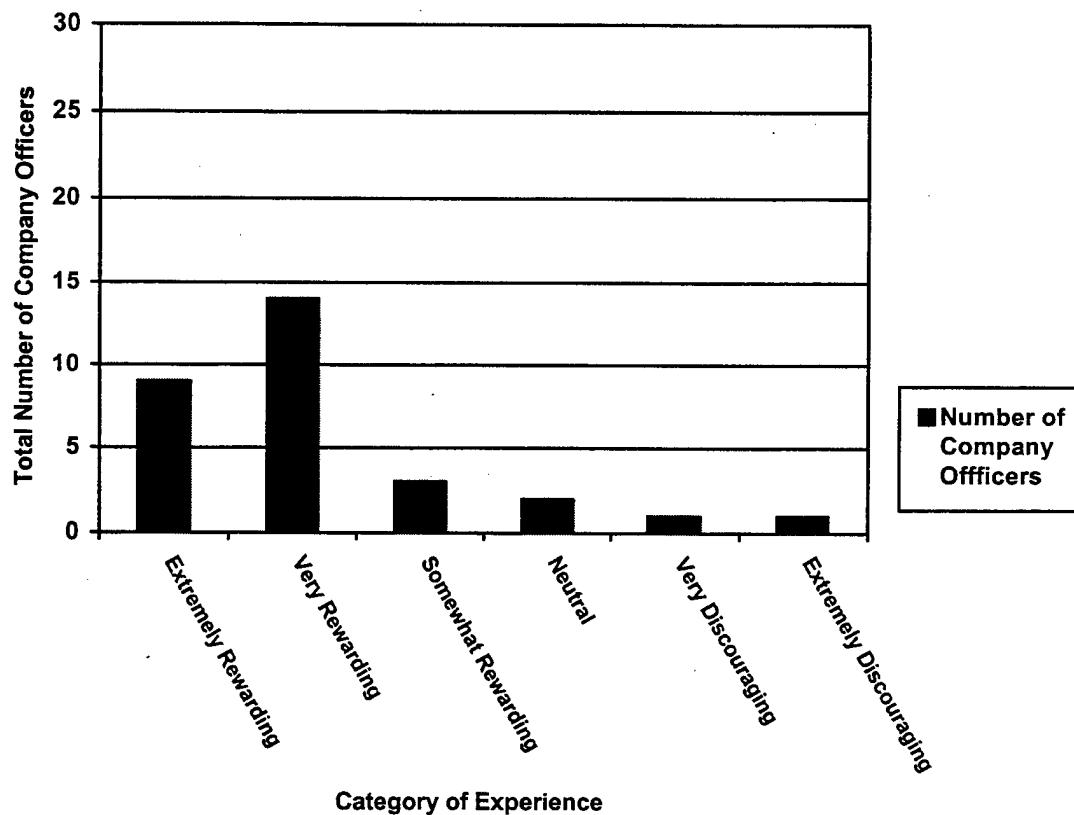
One ancillary, but related issue to this finding must also be mentioned. All of the fifteen Company Officers that addressed this problem with email taskings also addressed a problem with the amount of administrative work required of them. It is obvious that with additional taskings will come more administrative work. However, this subsequent

issue of administrative work was not only mentioned by the above fifteen, it was also mentioned by six other Company Officers. Some of these officers even recommended having a Yeomen assigned to their Company to help in administrative matters. "Less time with administrative burdens (I spend 30 minutes at a copier, handing out papers to be filed), (I) need a full time yeoman." It is evident that many of the Company Officers feel as though unnecessary taskers and mindless administrative burdens are consuming a significant portion of their time. Recommendations for ameliorating this problem will be discussed later in the study.

**I. FINDING IV: OVERALL, COMPANY OFFICERS FEEL THAT BEING A COMPANY OFFICER AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY IS A REWARDING AND WORTHWHILE EXPERIENCE.**

At the end of each survey, each Company Officer was asked to rank their overall experience of being a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. Figure 2 shows the overall experience felt by all thirty Company Officers surveyed.

**Figure 2: Overall experience of being a Company Officer**



As seen from Figure 2, nearly all of the thirty Company Officers feel as though the overall experience they have had as being a Company Officer was rewarding to some degree. In fact, the combination of the three rewarding categories, *Extremely Rewarding*, *Very Rewarding*, and *Somewhat Rewarding*, demonstrates that 87 percent of the Company Officers rated their experience as positive. Conversely, out of thirty Company Officers, all polled independently, two of them said that their overall experience has been

discouraging to some degree, and two of them qualified their experience as *neutral*. Nevertheless, the overarching finding is that 87 percent of the Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy describe their experience as being rewarding to some degree. In an effort to provide reinforcement to ratings along a simple Likert scale, the researcher has provided anecdotal responses from the final question on the survey: "What would be your top recommendations for in-coming Company Officers?" All of the thirty Company Officers' responses to this particular question are highlighted in this section of the study. This was done for two reasons: First, the responses to this particular question provide the reader with the greatest amount of insight in to how the Company Officer feels about his or her overall role. Secondly, one of the goals of this research project is to help prepare future officers for their roles as Company Officers. Thus, the researcher would be remiss to leave out a piece of advice given from officers currently holding this billet. The following are the recommendations of 30 Company Officers to the future Company Officers of the United States Naval Academy, presented in random order:

This job is what you make it. The administration's view of what a good Company Officer is and what my view is are two completely different things...that's just the way it is. You can spend quality time here doing your job, mentoring your midshipmen until 1930 every night, and no one will notice. Or you can never be here, leave everyday at 1300, and no one will really notice, as long as you "answer the mail" on stuff involving your company...emails, etc. This results in some pretty interesting views from the top on who the best Company Officers are...they don't notice these things, but the midshipmen sure do. The midshipmen know right away if you care about them and are seriously there for them to talk to...once you establish that and build a relationship with your company, there will be a line outside your door. But hey, you have to decide what you are here to do...are you here to earn an EP and advance your career? Fine, then you will have to spend a lot of time smoozing, serving on committees, and getting your name out there among the other Battalion Officers and the front office. But that will impact your ability to be on deck for your midshipmen. Having been in the job a little while, I realize you can't do both. I fully realize when fitness report time comes up, other Battalion Officers will say, "We don't know him. Who is that guy? He hasn't made himself visible enough to be an EP." And you know what? I could seriously give a rat's ass. I'm here with a distinct mission...to make a difference in the lives of midshipmen and have a positive influence on them. That is a full time job. If no one else notices you are doing a good job, don't worry about it. Focus on what is important. Run your unit as you see fit. This is one of the best jobs in the Navy, it really is. I could do this job until I retire and never get bored.

Have a presence in your company to demonstrate that you care about their development. Let them know that all the decisions you make are about their professional development and that you make them with the best intentions. I would also recommend that you get your midshipmen involved in helping you make decisions. Force them to come up with corrective actions and be patient with them as they learn. They are fascinating and remarkably capable if you give them an opportunity and then provide guidance as you go along.

Get into Bancroft Hall as much as possible while you don't have any responsibilities in the Hall. Understand this machine and get a good turnover. The Master's program is one of the few shore assignments in the military where an officer is given a complete year to study and prepare for his next assignment without distractions. There should be few surprises because you have unlimited access to the Naval Academy. Learn about the institution and have a winning strategy that begins day one of your becoming a Company Officer (head coach). Also, get the thesis done prior. Remember we still bring officers from the fleet who become Company Officers without going through the Master's program. Consequently, graduates of the program must come onboard figure out ways to make the institution better. Prove that the Master's Program is value added.

Come to the job with a positive outlook toward midshipmen. Assume (and correctly I might add) that they act in accordance with how we have trained them. We are the ones responsible for their development and most of their shortcomings stem from our inattention or misguidance. They will not make things important unless we teach them why they are important. This is especially difficult for Marine officers who are accustomed to a culture where certain things are absolutes. Some of these are not absolutes to midshipmen because their importance has not been impressed upon them. Realize that your job is to be a mentor and not a commander (for all the reasons I outlined earlier). You need to be accepting of their failures so that you can help them to translate them into successes. I rather enjoy letting them make mistakes because it provides me an opportunity to teach (and gives) them an opportunity to learn. Do not get frustrated with the limitations thrust upon you by senior leadership. I do not feel that any of these limitations significantly impede your ability to be a positive influence. I find there is plenty of opportunity for professional development in the company, even within the restrictions set forth above.

Spend time getting to know your people, starting with the First Class midshipmen. The more midshipmen see you interacting with them, the more they will appreciate/respect you. Let midshipmen run things. This is their chance at experimenting with leadership. You have already proven your ability. Let them try, fail, and succeed on their own—guide them as they need it. Nothing here will cause the loss of life or money like you just saw in the fleet. Don't get worked up about the petty nuances of the day. Remember the big picture here at the Academy is to produce officers. We will not deploy, nor will we go into combat, so nothing can be that critical. Take it all in stride.

Work hard to build up the camaraderie and cohesion of the Bancroft Hall wardroom. Keep in contact with other Company Officers to exchange ideas and work together to change the system.

Set your priorities and stick with them. For example, if you feel it's important to spend time with your midshipmen, designate from 1000-1200 every day to deal only with midshipmen. Allow only true emergencies to interfere with this time. Get to know everyone in your company as well as you can. They respond very well when you show genuine interest in what they are doing. In turn, they put forth a good deal of effort and everything runs more smoothly.

Have dedication, patience and an open mind. Have plenty of humor to go around.

A Brookings Institute study tried to determine the one act, which would help develop leaders. After extensive research, they said it was opportunity. The best thing a CO can do is to figure out ways to provide opportunity for their people to lead/succeed. Make sure the First Class are truly running the company. This job is different than being a DIVO (Division Officer). A DIVO is concerned mostly with the bottom line...torpedoes on target, on time, under budget. A Company Officer should not be so concerned with how many people haven't filled in their absentee data for their academics. Instead, they should be concerned about the process used to help the First Class Academic Officer come to a point where they can develop a strategy to make sure their goals are reached. It's the process NOT the bottom line, which is most important.

Keep an open mind. If you hate people (especially midshipmen) you're in the wrong business. The concept of autonomy is stupid. People bitch that they have no autonomy in their companies. Of course they don't. They work for a Battalion Officer who works for the Commandant. Sometimes the answer to why we're doing something is "because that's the way the one star wants it." That "challenge paradigms" stuff from LEAD only works to a certain degree and then it's time to think about being in the Navy. This whole autonomy gripe gets stale. This is a great job if you work within the parameters you've got and try to make a difference in some people's lives.

Get to know the midshipmen in your company, by name...it really means a lot to them. Keep your door open...you'd be amazed at how many times someone will stick their head in to chat. Think and try long and hard before giving up on a midshipman. I know we can't save them all, but most of them are good kids who want nothing more than to succeed.

Be honest and open, and don't just go through the motions. Attend their events.

Enjoy the LEAD program and reflect extensively upon past experiences. That deep reflection provides a great avenue to connect and share with midshipmen.

Don't trust midshipmen to do the right thing. During my first three weeks as a plebe summer Company Officer I had an absolutely miserable time. I was stuck in the paradigm from my days as a midshipman that plebe detailers are squared away and follow orders. When the first few violations of plebe summer rules by plebe detailers began surfacing I had numerous counseling sessions with the detailers. Eventually I had to fry one detailer for using profane language, and awarded "C's" in performance to three detailers and "B's" in performance to four other detailers. All plebe detailers should be "A" performers in my opinion. As well, I learned that two of the midshipmen whom I had given "C's" to were physically training plebes in the middle of the night and keeping them up all night doing writing assignments. In hindsight, I would have relieved the midshipmen no questions asked after the first warning. A company commander who knows about these incidents and does nothing (that is what I had) is no benefit to you or the company. You need someone as company commander who is not afraid to reprimand a peer. Issue the form-2 because a midshipman understands loss of liberty. Find the midshipmen you can trust and with their help, hold your midshipmen accountable to do what they are supposed to do. Talk to Company Officers who have done this for a period of time and get the gouge. Listen to the advice of your senior enlisted. They have good ideas and sometimes midshipmen feel comfortable telling them things that they would not tell you.

Don't accept the status quo, and always raise the bar.

Don't get too cerebral--use the leadership techniques and draw on the success you've had in the fleet as a launching point. Again, it's not rocket science--at its most fundamental level its just human interaction.

Whether you are a graduate or not, do plebe summer. It is the best way to get to know your midshipmen and the system that they are operating under. The days are long, but it is over before you know it and you will establish a relationship with them that is invaluable. Let the midshipmen make the decisions and be there when they fail. Don't let them fall on their swords, but allow them to run the company. Hold the senior leadership accountable. They will respect you for that and will run with it nine times out of ten. You already know how to lead and could run the company on your own, but let them give it a shot. They will surprise you.

Good luck, roll w/the punches and have fun.

Remain flexible and be ready to work hard. Do whatever is necessary to spend time with midshipmen. They will appreciate it and it's good for them. Take care of your midshipmen, but make the hard calls. Some of them don't deserve to be here.

Live as close as possible to work. Understand you will miss the operational side of the Navy. Don't go to everything you are invited to or expected at. You'll die. It's feast or famine. Sometimes you will be bored, but everything comes at once. If you thinking you are getting out, go somewhere else for your shore tour. There are no contacts to be made here that can help you on the outside.

Be open to many people's interpretations of "the rules." Don't expect the "ideal" midshipman to be the norm here. Don't get wrapped up in the minutia that we cannot change despite the number of point papers one writes.

Stand by for the most demanding/rewarding/frustrating job you could have. While most days will include quite a bit of frustration with the chain of command, it is imperative to maintain the focus of why we are here, and that is to develop midshipmen to achieve their utmost potential. There is little praise for a job well done, but there is enough reprimand to last a lifetime. The satisfaction will come from seeing the development of midshipmen and how they learn from you and themselves because of things they learned from you. It will get extremely difficult to stay intrinsically motivated, but it is important to stay the course.

While this is shore duty, it is not a recharge job. Take time everyday to see your family or run errands. It is the only thing that will keep you sane.

Would not recommend the job to any peer, despite the free education. The philosophy of the LEAD program and the requirements of the Company Officer billet are not compatible.

Smile. Be prepared to work with young folks. Anticipate that 98 percent of them are doing what you would hope... studying/learning/forming a positive identity. Don't let the 2 percent get you down and don't let the 2 percent get away with it either. But even then, you're talking about one or two bad apples in a company and they always show their true colors, so focus on the positive.

Focus on the midshipmen! One could possibly get wrapped up in the administrative crap around here to include e-mail taskers from all over the yard. Filter it, disregard it, and concentrate on the development and education of our future officers. Talk to midshipmen, counsel midshipmen, eat with midshipmen, attend their sporting events, even drink a beer with a midshipmen (I know blasphemy around here)...Forget about the pettiness of midshipmen regulations/conduct/directives from above—they will always be here and most midshipmen thrive in this environment. They are the ones who deserve your attention...not the few knucklehead midshipmen or other officers who will eat up your time if you let them.

Good luck and take care of you, no one else is going to. Be there for your midshipmen, they are the most important thing and you owe it to them to teach them what you've learned the hard way.

Don't expect the Battalion Officers to do anything for you or listen for your input. Don't waste your time trying to get to every midshipman in your company it won't work. Enjoy your shore tour.

Do plebe summer or spend as much time in the hall this semester as you can just to observe and get a feel for the atmosphere- -or-- go far far away....

Enjoy the job; spend time with the midshipmen; don't forget that you are a commissioned officer who has actually done something real in the Fleet/FMF; don't let the midshipmen turn you into an "admin weenie"; share with the midshipmen how awesome it is to be a Platoon Commander/Aviator/SWO, etc.; Allow them to come talk to you/ask you questions, because they have plenty.

By reading all of these uncensored, candid, sometimes verbose recommendations a person can see the wide range of feelings and emotions the Company Officers have about their jobs. In addition to relaying the nature of their experiences, many of the Company Officers have provided some sage advice for future officers.

Overall, the researcher found this portion of thesis to be one of the most enjoyable sections to report. Not only is the material very positive, but the candid remarks by the current Company Officers offer a tremendous amount of value and power to this section. Many times the advice given by a colleague who holds a coveted position is "worth its weight in gold." Then again, sometimes it is not.

## **J. SUMMARY OF THE CURRENT ROLE OF THE COMPANY OFFICER**

As noted by one Company Officer, "There is no typical day; everyday is unique (and) flexibility is the key." Throughout this section of the study, the researcher has tried to quantify and delineate the true role of a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. In this endeavor, information and insight was presented both in a quantitative and qualitative format, which clarified two distinct aspects about the role of the Company Officer.

First, the reader now has a better general understanding of what the Company Officer does on a daily basis. Granted, no day will be exactly the same for everyone, but there were commonalities found in the research and these noted congruencies in behavior and routine help to answer one of the most difficult questions: "What is your typical day like as a Company Officer?"

Secondly, this chapter has provided the reader with four findings that were found amongst most of the Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy. The word "most" is used because it must be remembered that the researcher's definition of a finding entailed fifteen or more Company Officer stating the same idea. That being said, the four findings were: (1) Company Officers feel as though they lack the quality time to spend with midshipmen, (2) Company Officers have insufficient autonomy to lead and manage effectively, (3) Company Officers receive too many "taskers" from outside the chain-of-command, (4) Overall, Company Officers feel that being a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy is a rewarding and worthwhile experience. A significant amount of the knowledge from this section resides in the many candid quotes

by the Company Officers. These quotes provide the reader with both a wealth of knowledge and deeper understanding of the role of the Company Officer.

Finally, there were commonalities found in the research and some aspects were positive while others were negative. Nevertheless, the information has been presented in an uncensored form which gives the reader tremendous insight into the many thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the Company Officers. In the final chapter of this thesis, the role of the Company Officer will be summarized and some recommendations will be provided in an effort to improve upon one of the most important positions at the United States Naval Academy.

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## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

I neither ask nor desire to know anything of your plans. Take the responsibility and act, and call on me for assistance.

-Abraham Lincoln to General Ulysses S. Grant on his appointment to command the Union Armies, 1864 (Safire, 1990; p. 70).

### **A. OVERVIEW**

In this study, the researcher used two specific methods to define the current role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy. First, the researcher examined the historical perspective of the Company Officers. This cursory overview delineated how the official mission of the Company Officer has changed very little throughout time. Secondly, the researcher used survey data collected from the 30 Company Officers who resided at the Naval Academy from the period of 2000-2001. The data provided both quantitative and qualitative results. The daily routine of the Company Officer along with the Company Officers perceptions of the LEAD Program were both quantified and thoroughly examined. In addition, through the "Grounded Theory Approach," the researcher was able to glean four qualitative findings from the survey: Company Officers lack the necessary time for quality interaction with the midshipmen, Company Officers have insufficient autonomy to lead and manage effectively, Company Officers receive too many "taskers" from outside the chain of command, and the overall Company Officer experience is rewarding and worthwhile. These findings were supported by specific quotes from the Company Officers that addressed particular items on each issue. In closing, this final chapter consists of a

number of conclusions and recommendations that are presented in an effort to improve upon the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy.

## B. CONCLUSIONS

Because of the potential benefits of mentoring, it is vitally important that senior officers undertake this mission of cultivating lower-level leaders. Today's junior officers are tomorrow's senior leaders of the Armed Forces (Taylor & Rosenbach, 2000; p. 218).

The mission of the United States Naval Academy is to *develop midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty in order to provide graduates who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government* (Mission of the United States Naval Academy, 2001). Categorically, this mission of the Naval Academy is of premier importance. However, the researcher submits that there is an equally important mission that needs to occur simultaneously within the confines of the Naval Academy: the development of the junior officer.

The mission of the Naval Academy specifically states the goal of creating junior officers (graduates) who have *potential for future development*. There exists a magnanimous reason for this development. The continued fortune of both the Naval Service and this Nation rests in the hands of the future leaders. Therefore, their development both as young midshipmen and junior officers is paramount.

When midshipmen graduate, hopefully the Naval Academy has accomplished its mission. The graduates should be people who are imbued with the *highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty*, and these junior officers should continually develop their skills as

leaders in either the Navy or the Marine Corps from this point forward. It is the responsibility of the Company Commanders, Battalion Commanders, Division Officers, Department Heads, and Squadron Commanders to continue this leadership development. By holding fast to this eminent responsibility, the senior leaders of the Naval Service will effectually be capitalizing on the second part of the Naval Academy mission—developing the potential of junior officers so they can someday assume higher responsibilities. These senior leaders will take young junior officers/ graduates who *have potential for future growth in mind and character* and transform them into effective and influential senior leaders of tomorrow. For a majority of these young men and women this transformation and development occurs far away from the Naval Academy. It takes place in wardrooms, ready rooms, recruiting offices, and a multitude of other places where junior officers are stationed. However, the Naval Academy is an anomaly because it must fulfill both aspects of the mission. Not only must it prepare midshipmen for success but it also must develop the potential of junior officers so that they can someday *assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.* Unfortunately, this is where the Naval Academy has capitulated—it is not developing the full potential of some of its junior officers stationed at the Naval Academy, particularly the Company Officers.

To develop individuals into more astute leaders requires that they be placed in positions where they are afforded the ability to make tough decisions.

Authority provides a person with the official right to make decisions. Without decision making there can be no growth on the part of the individual or the company. When a person makes a decision he must use his mind to think and analyze; otherwise he operates by rote. If a person operates by rote long enough, eventually he forgets how to think and use his mind constructively. It is only by exercising the powers of one's mind that a person is able to move on to higher levels of achievement...Growth is impossible when all the decisions are made at the top (Tracy, 1990; p. 37).

It is the belief of the researcher, that the senior leadership at the Naval Academy, in an effort to be equitable to all midshipmen in all companies, has neglected the opportunity to fully develop the potential of a highly talented and well-qualified subgroup of junior officers. The senior leaders at the Naval Academy need to empower the Company Officers.

## **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Empowerment**

Empowerment is one of the least understood "buzzwords" of the last decade. So many leaders think that empowerment is simply giving authority to subordinates and, conversely, so many subordinates think empowerment is free reign to do whatever they want. Both of these assumptions are blatantly wrong. The true definition of empowerment is revealed best by analyzing the end product--employees "accept responsibility, (they) have proprietary interest in the company, and (they) want to work hard for the Company" (Blanchard, Carlos, Randolph, 1990; p. 2). While, simultaneously, the employees feel valued. They are involved in their jobs, and they feel pride in their everyday work. In order to reach this end state, this balance between ownership and a sense of worth, a leader needs to look at the positions within his or her hierarchy and evaluate them in accordance with responsibility and authority.

Authority, like power, is hoarded in most companies. Managers delegate authority with great trepidation, which is one of the reasons why there is so much bureaucracy in large companies. There is always the possibility that a person will abuse the authority that has been given to him. In most cases, however, it is better to err on the side of giving a person too much authority rather than too little. When people have authority they tend to take more initiative (Tracy, 1990; p. 33).

In the previous section of this study, a problem regarding authority issues with the Company Officers was highlighted. If the Naval Academy wants to reinvigorate these officers, perhaps, it should closely examine the level of responsibility held by these officers and compare it with the amount of authority bestowed upon them. From the Company Officers' perspective, there are some serious incongruencies. If the Naval Academy administration wants to hold Company Officers accountable for the development of midshipmen, then these officers should have the necessary authority to affect the leadership development process within their respective companies. "If a person is to be held responsible for the results he achieves, he must have the right to make decisions within the limits of his responsibility" (Tracy, 1990; p. 33). So, how does a leader decide how much authority he or she should give? Here are two ideas that address this topic.

In determining how much authority to give to a person you should first look at the job to be performed. Ask yourself how much authority will be needed to fulfill those responsibilities.... After you have examined the job you'll want to take the person into consideration. How capable is the person of exercising the authority assigned to the job? Depending on your answer you may want to modify the authority somewhat....The point we are making is that the authority assigned to the job should always be equal to the responsibility (Tracy, 1990; p. 33).

All the current Company Officers at the Naval Academy have been entrusted with the lives of Sailors and Marines in the fleet. They were selected to come to the Naval Academy because they demonstrated the requisite amount of maturity necessary to lead

midshipmen. In addition, they all have received their individual warfare designations and, in the fleet, they demonstrated that they were extremely competent junior officers. Furthermore, these officers were sent to the Naval Academy to “provide training, counseling, and guidance for midshipmen in their development into superior Naval Leaders” (Kyle, 2000; p. 2). A quote by a Company Officer clearly relays the perception concerning the level of authority granted with regards to the level of responsibility expected. This was the question posed to the Company Officer: In the execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?

Approval authority of special requests...A waste of my time to route chits above my level as required by MIDREGS. If I would've routed similar requests above my pay grade in the (fleet) I would have been relieved for cause as being incompetent and incapable of making simple decisions about my people. This approval authority and centralized command of the Naval Academy is antithetical to the special trust and confidence given to officers in any of my previous commands. Insulting and patronizing to someone who literally made life and death decisions flying tactically every day.

This type of feeling permeated the responses of 63.3 percent of the Company Officers at the Naval Academy. The officers who hold these influential positions are some of the highest quality junior officers who come from the fleet. And, in the fleet, all of these officers were expected to operate within certain boundaries of authority and responsibility, which empirically do not exist at the Naval Academy. This has frustrated a majority of the Company Officers.

When you delegate responsibility but fail to delegate adequate authority, most people will interpret your actions this way: “He wants me to do the job, but he doesn’t trust me with the authority I need to get the job done” (Tracy, 1990; p. 149).

When this type of feeling develops with a majority of individuals, it is safe to assume that the Navy is not getting the most out of its people. The system is fettering the

Company Officers' efforts to accomplish their mission: To "provide training, counseling, and guidance for midshipmen in their development into superior Naval Leaders" (Kyle, 2000; p. 2).

The Naval Academy administration needs to maximize the potential that resides in the Company Officers. The administration needs to start empowering these individuals rather than enervating them.

A manager empowers others by trusting in them, which helps them believe more in themselves. The more people believe in themselves, the more power they have to achieve success. A manager has more power to achieve his own objectives when the people who work for him believe in themselves (Tracy, 1990; p. 121).

Currently, according to Midshipmen Regulations Manual, the Company Officers have the authority to grant:

- Special liberty and excusal from military evolution(s) (e.g., Sub or Conditioning Squad, parades, restriction musters, intramurals, formations.)
  - Weekend liberty in accordance with instructions.
  - Town or Yard liberty.
  - Missing of Honor lectures, Forrestal lectures, CIP Briefs.
- (Midshipmen Regulations Manual, COMDTMIDINST 5400.6B, 25 Aug 00).

In addition to these four areas of approval, Company Officers may withhold liberty from midshipmen in their respective companies. According to the Midshipmen Regulations Manual, these are the only areas where the Company Officers have the final authority. However, anecdotal evidence from current affairs at the Naval Academy has demonstrated that this may not even be the case. For instance, item number one states that the Company Officers have the authority to grant excusal from military evolutions; parades included. Anecdotally, one Company Officer had to abdicate this authority for final approval by the Battalion Officer. Therefore, this small area of authority held by the Company Officers may have eroded even further. According to many Company

Officers, the Battalion Officers are the individuals who really have the authority at the Naval Academy.

According to the Midshipmen Regulations Manual, the Battalion Officers have the approval authority over the following:

- Emergency/ Special leave requests.
- Missing classes.
- Exceptions to movement orders/excusal lists.
- Missing a regularly scheduled examination(s) during end of semester and academic reserve periods.
- Missing TAPS.
- Missing Sunday evening formations.
- Exceptions to weekend eligibility requirements.
- Conducting activities with 4/C before 0630 Reveille.

(Midshipmen Regulations Manual, COMDTMIDINST 5400.6B, 25 Aug 00).

In an effort to empower, reinvigorate, and “develop the Company Officers,” it is the recommendation of the researcher that a redistribution of authority must take place. Of the eight items listed above, seven of them should be transferred to the Company Officer level. The authority to grant emergency/ special leave should be the only item that remains at the Battalion Officer level. It is the personal opinion of the researcher that it does not take an O-5 or O-6 to approve someone to miss class. Furthermore, it should be well within the power of a warfare qualified, selected O-3 to grant midshipmen permission to miss the Sunday evening formation. In order to “develop the potential” of this group of junior officers they must be afforded the ability to make these types of decisions. Through wise counsel and guidance, the Battalion Officers can help these junior officers become seasoned, responsible, and prudent decision-makers rather than “mouth pieces” that cannot make simple decisions without consulting higher authority.

If the administration were to move these areas of authority down to the Company Officer level the following could result:

- Company Officers may take more ownership in the daily running of their Companies.
- Company Officers could develop their decision-making ability, which in turn, would develop them into better leaders.
- Company Officers may be able to instill a higher level of motivation and cohesion within their own Companies.
- Company Officers would have more leadership tools at their disposal to get the very best out of the midshipmen.
- Company Officers may feel as though they were trusted by the administration.
- The Naval Academy could possibly begin to fulfill the second aspect of their mission: the development of these junior officers who will, potentially, someday *assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government*.
- Midshipmen would see that junior officers have responsibility and are trusted to make decisions.

These are just a few of the many positive attributes that may result from a shifting of the authority levels.

Authority levels should never be engraved in stone. They must be adjusted from time to time to meet the changing needs of the business and the changing responsibilities of the jobs. Assigning the appropriate authority levels to jobs at all levels is critical to the efficient operation of any business...(Tracy, 1990; p. 42).

Even though this type of change would be of great improvement to the role of the Company Officer, it would not be void of problems. There may be times when Company Officers abuse their authority, and when this occurs, the administration should act accordingly with the individual(s). However, this does not mean that the administration should seize the authority levels entrusted in the other abiding Company Officers. There will be a greater benefit in allowing good Company Officers the ability to retain their authority rather than revoking all the authority from all of the Company Officers for isolated infractions. Just as midshipmen development is important at the Naval Academy so too is junior officer development.

## **2. "Tasking" Protocol**

There is a direct correlation between the amount of "taskers" someone receives with the amount of administrative work and time that it takes to complete each tasker. Ninety Percent of the Company Officers wish they could have more quality time with midshipmen and 70 percent of them stated that they did too much "useless administrative work." Furthermore, 50 percent of the Company Officers highlighted on their survey that one of hindrances to their jobs is all the taskings they receive from outside their chain of command. When one Company Officer was asked where he or she would like to spend less time the Company Officer replied, "Answering requests from every staff/faculty member on the yard with a 'good idea'. Company Officers please have your midshipman.... Collect.... Return to us at ..." Therefore, in an effort to ameliorate these problems, the researcher recommends a change in the "tasking" protocol.

All of the taskings for the Company Officers should be routed through the Battalion Officers. By following this procedure not only will the Battalion Officers be fully cognizant of what their Company Officers are doing, but they will also have the ability to limit the amount of extraneous taskers that seem to plague their Company Officers. This procedure would free up a considerable amount of time for the Company Officers so they could interact more effectively with their midshipmen. In essence, it would help to mollify two of the findings discovered in the researcher: The lack of quality time Company Officers feel they have with midshipmen, and the extraneous taskers coming from outside the chain of command.

The Company Officers at the United States Naval Academy have the potential to significantly impact a countless number of midshipmen during their formative years.

However, the Company Officer role and the impact they have on their midshipmen can be improved. Hopefully, these two recommendations will only be the beginning of a renewed focus on betterment of the Company Officer role and development.

#### **D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This thesis analyzed the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy from the perspective of the 30 Company Officers from the period of 2000-2001. As stated in Chapter I, to fully understand the role of the Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy it must be examined from a variety of angles. Therefore, the following is a list of recommendations for future research on this topic:

- a. Examine the role of the Company Officer from the perspective of the Battalion Officers stationed at the Naval Academy. Conduct interviews with the six Battalion Officers and gather their thoughts and ideas on what they perceive the role of the Company Officer to be.
- b. Examine the role of the Company Officer from the perspective of the Senior Leadership at the United States Naval Academy. Conduct interviews with current and former Commandants and Superintendents of the Naval Academy, and gather their ideas and thoughts on what they perceive the role of the Company Officer to be.
- c. Examine the role of the Company Officer from the midshipmen perspective. Collect information from current midshipmen regarding what they perceive the role of the Company Officer to be.

#### **E. FINAL THOUGHTS**

It was the leadership and guidance provided by a previous Company Officer that inspired the researcher to become a Marine Officer. In the fledgling years of officer development that transpire on the banks of the Severn, midshipmen often times will look for leaders and mentors who will inspire them and guide them through this formative and

tumultuous period. The Company Officers at the Naval Academy are in a wonderful position to be just those leaders or mentors for these burgeoning future officers.

This research has thoroughly examined the role of the Company Officer, and from the defining days until now, these highly skilled, talented, mature, and selfless individuals continue to strive and reach out to midshipmen in an effort to prepare them for the many potential challenges they will face. The senior leadership now must reach out to the Company Officers and unfetter the restraints that are upon them and unbridle the leadership potential that exists within this cohort. In the end, these officers will be better able to shape and guide these fine young men and women through their formative years here at the United States Naval Academy.

**APPENDIX A: COMPANY OFFICER QUESTIONNAIRE**

**COMPANY OFFICER QUESTIONNAIRE**



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**THE ROLE OF THE COMPANY OFFICER AT THE  
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY**

## **Commitment of Confidentiality**

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. Let it be known to you, that all information that you provide will remain anonymous. Nowhere in the write up of this study will there be a name associated with a statement, nor a name associated with a graph. Furthermore, if the demographics of a particular question are too small they also will not be included. That being said, I hope and encourage you to answer all questions as forthright as possible. The purpose of this study is to define the current role of the Company Officer and make recommendations for needed change. Therefore, your detailed and honest opinions are very important for both this study and the improvement of your current position. Thank you for your time.

---

Tyrel W. Moxey  
Captain, USMC

## **Company Officer Questionnaire**

**1. Please Provide the following information:**

- a. Service:**
- b. Rank:**
- c. Years of Service:**
- d. Occupational Specialty:**
- e. Gender:**
- f. Months as a Company Officer:**

**2. List the expectations you had about the Company Officer position prior to beginning.**

**3. Did all of these expectations match the reality of the job? If they didn't which ones did not and why?**

4. Fill out on the chart below of what your typical day consists of:

Time	Activity

5. How many minutes or hours do you spend a day with each of the following categories?

Category	Min/Hrs
Administrative work on the Computer	
Meetings	
Sporting Events	
Discussions with Midshipmen	
Interacting with Battalion Officer	
Interacting with the Academic Department(s)	
Personal Physical fitness	
Conduct/Honor Cases	
Other:	

6. In your role as a Company Officer, list three areas where you would like to spend more time and briefly describe why?

7. Conversely, describe three areas where you would like to spend less time and why?

8. Fill in the level of frustration that you experience when interacting with each of the following categories. (Place a "X" after your chosen level)

a. Midshipmen

Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

b. Academic Department

Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

c. Professional Development

Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

d. Bancroft Administration

Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

e. NAAA

Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

f. PE Department

Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

g. Other (Input Category of your Choice: \_\_\_\_\_)

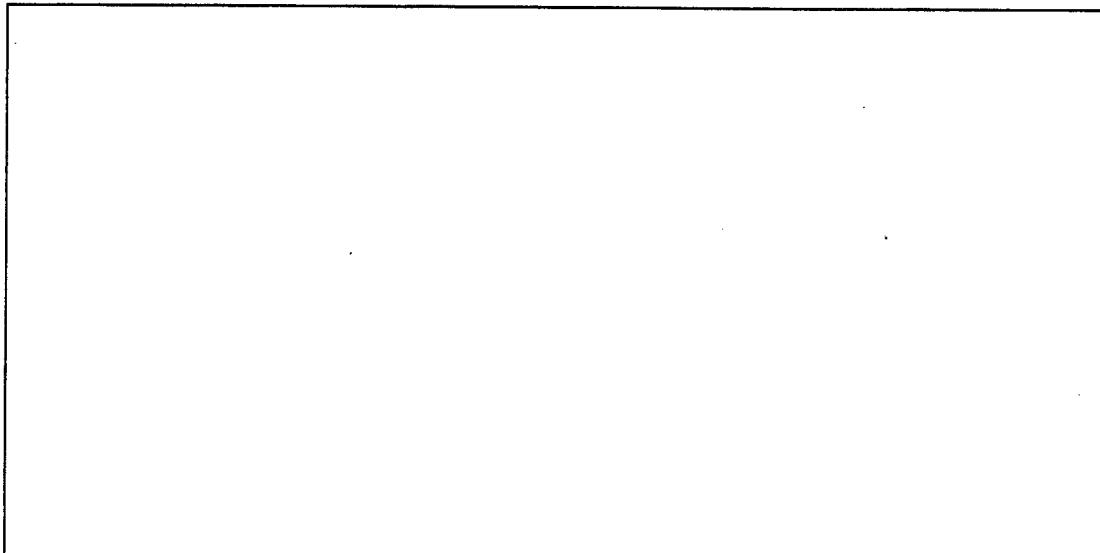
Extremely Frustrating:      Somewhat Frustrating:      No Frustration:

9. With the following scale, rank your relationship with your Battalion Officer in the following categories.

- 1---See eye to eye: Same View Point
- 2---Disagree very little: Nearly the Same View Point
- 3---Disagree often: Hardly the Same View Point
- 4---Disagree all the time: Never the Same View Point

Category	Number
Company Officer Autonomy	
Punishment for Midshipmen	
Rewards for Midshipmen	
Midshipmen Liberty	
Officer Involvement with Midshipmen	
Special Requests for Midshipmen	
Other	

10. In the execution of your role as a Company Officer, what are some of your most significant job impediments?



- 11. Using the scale below, identify how the Leadership Education And Development Program helped you prepare for being a Company Officer in the following areas.**

- 1—Was Extremely Helpful  
2—Was Moderately Helpful  
3---Was of No Help  
4—Not Applicable (Did not Attend the LEAD Program)

Category	Score
Midshipmen Counseling	
Midshipmen Mentoring	
Administrative Work	
The Building of Company Cohesion	
Personal Leadership Skills	
Interaction with Superiors	
Organization of Committee and Team Projects	
Other	

**In the Category(s) that you marked a “3” describe what you think the LEAD program could have done to better prepare you.**

- 12. What one word would describe your role as a company officer and why would you use that word?**

- 13. On a daily basis, how many midshipmen do you have lengthy interactions with? This could be either counseling or casual conversations, but both are substantial.**

<b>Number of Midshipmen</b>	<b>Please Mark one</b>
0-1 Midshipmen	
2-5 Midshipmen	
6-10 Midshipmen	
11-20 Midshipmen	
21-30 Midshipmen	
Over 30 Midshipmen	

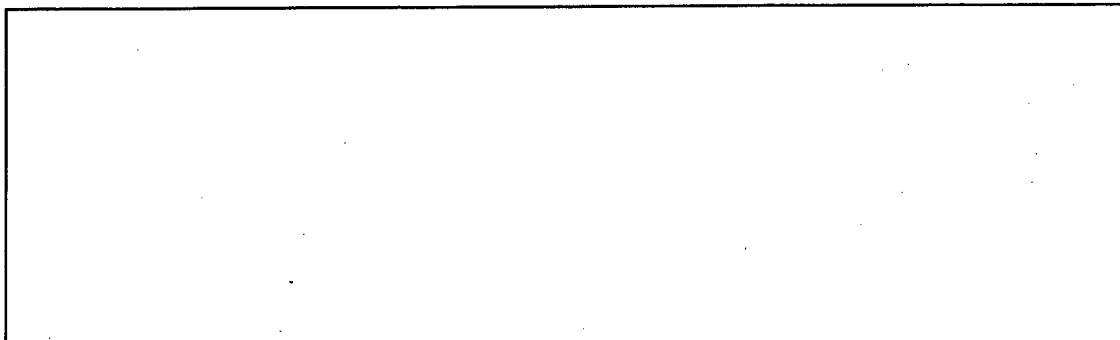
- 14. How would you rate your overall experience as a Company Officer at the United States Naval Academy?**

<b>Please Mark one</b>
Extremely Rewarding
Very Rewarding
Somewhat Rewarding
Neutral
Somewhat discouraging
Very discouraging
Extremely discouraging

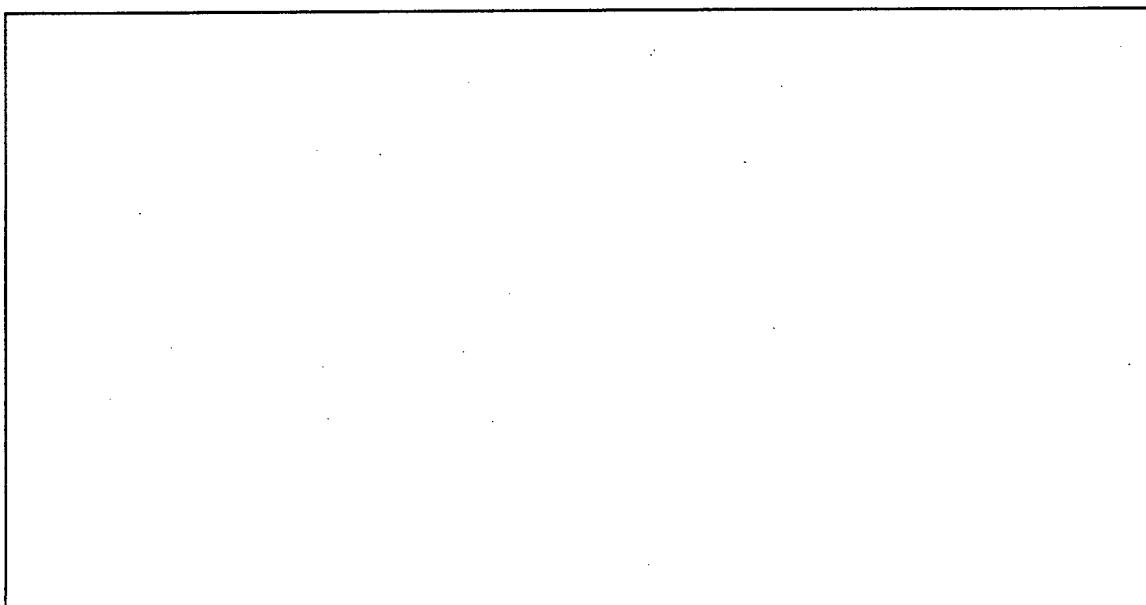
- 15. As a Company Officer what are your favorite things to do?**

- 16. Conversely, What are your least favorite things to do as a Company Officer?**

**17. If you could make changes in your job as a Company Officer what would they be? Briefly describe each one.**



**18. What would be your top recommendations for in-coming Company Officers?**



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